

ॐ अर्चिकित्वाञ्जिकितुषांश्चिदत्राकवीन् पृच्छामि विद्वाने न विद्वान् ।
वि यस्तुस्तंभ षष्ठिमा रजास्यजस्यरूपेकिमपिस्विदेकम् ॥
(ऋ० १.१६४.६)

देवतातत्त्वमजानन अहं विशेषेण तत्त्वं जानतः क्रान्तदर्शिनः
अधिगतपरमार्थान् अस्मिन् तत्त्व विषये परमार्थज्ञानाय पृच्छामि,
विद्वान् न पृच्छामि अपि तु अज्ञानादेव । इति सायणः॥

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Neo Vedanta And Modernity

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Bithika Mukerji

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Foreword by Dr. George Grant

Prof. George Grant was for many years Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada. He has been called by his countrymen "a massive seer, pointing out the aridity of the mainstream of Western intellectual life since Bacon." His noble vision of what men may achieve if they were to understand the true implications of modernity, has inspired many generations of students. It is said that one of the reasons that Canada is held in respect by the intellectual world is Prof. George Grant.

Later Prof. Grant taught in Dalhousie University, Halifax, Canada.

अचिकित्वाञ्चिकितुषश्चिदत्र

कवीन् पृच्छामि विद्यने न विद्वान् ।।

ऋ० १.१६४.६

I am ignorant; out of my ignorance I ask the seers for enlightenment.

NEO-VEDANTA AND MODERNITY

BITHIKA MUKERJI



**ASHUTOSH PRAKASHAN SANSTHAN
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2008

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Dedication

In memory of my teacher and guide in philosophy

**Anukul Chandra Mukhopadhyaya
(A. C. Mukerji)**

Dedication
In memory of my teacher and guide in philosophy
Anukul Chandra Mukhopadhyaya
(A. C. Mukherji)

CONTENTS

PART—I

Preface and acknowledgements	i
Foreword	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter One : The Framework for Modernity : The Western Tradition	11
Chapter Two : Science, Technology and Automation	27
Chapter Three : The Indian Response to the Western Tradition	47
Chapter Four : English Neo-Hegelianism and Indian Scholarship	56
Chapter Five : Neo-Vedanta as the Philosophy of Contemporary India	72
Chapter Six : Intuition as a Category of thought in Vedanta : A. C. Mukerji	87
Chapter Seven: The World as Real in Vedanta:,	111
Chapter Eight : Neo-Vedanta as a Rational Philosophy and a 'Gospel of Life'	127
Chapter Nine : The Lack of Soteriological Awareness in Neo-Vedanta	140

Chapter Ten : Renunciation and Bliss	152
Chapter Eleven : The Ontology of Bliss	165
Chapter Twelve : Renunciation as the Pre-Condition of Realisation	183
Chapter Thirteen : Being as Bliss	196
Chapter Fourteen : On Ananda (Bliss)	205
Conclusion :	211

PART—II

The Translation of the Taittiriya-vidya-prakasah with an introduction, verse analyses and notes	1—90
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Bibliography	91
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Index of Words and Names	109
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List of Abbreviations	112
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Preface and acknowledgements

As College students we were reared on Neo-Vedanta and the Indian brand of Neo-Kantianism. Kant was the most important philosopher of the West for us because he seemed to have stated clearly the limitations of reason, vis-a-vis the region of the transcendent. As the Indian philosophical heritage was preoccupied with the effort of delimiting the scope of rationality in the sphere of ontology, Kant was hailed as a kindred spirit. We were not to know that Kant was one of the most important turning points in the history of Western philosophy and that he in fact, was perhaps, nowhere near the thoughts the Indians ascribed to him.

A. C. Mukerji, a leading exponent of the critical philosophy of his time, was my teacher and guide. His lectures on Vedanta were extremely popular. We could not and would not entertain the thought that his rendering of the Western tradition as paralleling the quest for the 'unmediated knower' was anything but true to the facts. For him the only worthwhile question (with which he sought to inspire every generation of students) in philosophy worth meditating upon was "how to know the Self or the 'unmediated knower'?"

My understanding of philosophy as a ground on which all people seized with similar concerns may meet and help each other was undermined, when I went to Geneva in 1972 for one year, to lead a seminar on Hinduism and Christianity. For the first time I was made aware of the many dimensions which go into the makeup of the West. The students were from many countries and from many denominations and all of them very well trained in theology. It was an exacting task for me to understand their problems and deal with them meaningfully. A philosophical discourse on 'The One Reality' seemed out of place because the problem

(ii)

haunting the Graduate School at Bossey from the beginning was how to enter into a dialogue with 'the other'. I write all this because this was an occasion for me to live and work together with people of dedication, who made me feel very welcome, although my presence called into question, for many of them, much of what they stood for.

I learnt much more about the Western tradition from Prof. George P. Grant at McMaster during the years 1973-77. Whatever is right and perceptive about the West, in this book, I have gathered from him and what is partial or wrong is my own interpretation of it.

It is a strange fact but I also came to a greater understanding of Advaita Philosophy at McMaster. I can not say enough about the dedicated work being done there by Drs. J. G. Arapura and K. Sivaraman. My understanding of the ontology of Bliss owes very much to Dr. Arapura's writings on the subjects of maya and gnosis. The difficult subject of my thesis which is now being printed as a book, was made interesting and a worthwhile proposition for me by Dr. K. Sivaraman. Without the many discussions we have had on the topic I would not have been able to develop the theme at all. The problem that I chose for study is, therefore, my way of acknowledging all that I had the opportunity of learning at McMaster.

I have great pleasure in recording my appreciation of the sustained encouragement extended to me by Dr. Peter George, during my absence from McMaster and also Dr. Chauncy Wood, who made it possible for me to return and defend the thesis.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge my indebtedness to my friends in Canada Ms Grace Gorden, Ms Marftha Frohlinger, Dr. Ivan Kocmarek and Wayne Barody who made this work not only possible but also enjoyable.

My grateful thanks are due to Dr. Sudhakar Malaviya who assumed the responsibility of printing the book and also Sri Rajendra Tiwari for his help in publishing it.

Foreword

It is both an honour and a pleasure to write a foreword to Dr. Bithika Mukerji's book. But it is more than that, because the central issue which is always present in this book is of such great importance for all thoughtful human beings, whether they be from the East or the West. What is the relation between modernity (call it if you will "technology") and the great truths of the religious and philosophical traditions from before the age of progress? Dr. Mukerji looks at this issue in terms of India, but it is clearly of equal importance in Europe, China, Russia and the Arab world. Perhaps it is most pressing in North America (from where I write) because we are the only civilisation that has no history from before the age of progress.

Many people in the world believe that technology is an instrument which human beings can use for their own purposes. Technology is believed to be external to the human purposes which are given in philosophic and religious traditions. It is believed that these traditions are not radically put into question by technology. This is contradicted by the fact that such countries as Russia and China have used Marxist forms of government to technologise their societies quickly. Of course, Marxism is not a philosophy which stands above technology, but a system of thought which is but an aspect of what was given in that great western emergence which we call "modernity" or "technology". Also of course that capitalist "liberalism", which is an alternative system of government for the modernising of societies, is also but part of what came forth from the primal affirmation of the modern West. The difference between capitalism and communism is a subsidiary difference to that between modern and pre-modern civilisations. As Heidegger, the greatest western philosopher of our era, has written; communism and capitalism are both predicates of the subject

technology. It is a vain delusion to believe that technology is an instrument that human beings can use as they choose. It is an affirmation about Being and as such penetrates every aspect of a civilisation when it becomes the way of that civilisation. In the light of that oblivion of eternitiy which so characterises the dynamic civilisations of the West, it is well for Dr. Mukerji to ask what happens to the apprehension of the ontology of the Vedanta in the context of modernity.

Dr. Mukerji has made herself enormously qualified to write about such a subject. She had taught the truth of the Vedanta for many years in India. She then came for a time to the West. She did not study western thought from the safe distance of India or from the pleasant confines of an Oxford college, as did Radhakrishnan. She first came to Geneva and then to a heartland of modernity, the Great Lakes region of North America. She came to a steel town and worked in a university dominated by the computer. Steel and computers are after all two central substances of modernity; steel of an earlier era, computers of the latest reign of cybernetics. She studied such great makers of modernity as Hobbes and Kant, Nietzsche and Heidegger. That is, she lived modernity in her daily flesh and bones, and thought it in her studies. She therefore has the right to speak of it not in some abstract way, but as it is in itself. She is greatly qualified to understand what it means in the context of the Vedantic ontology of bliss.

To a westerner such as myself, uneducated in the truth of the Vedanta but with knowledge of what has happened to Christianity in the face of the modern, Dr. Mukerji's chapters on the thought of A.C. Mukerji and Kokileshvar Sastri are of the greatest interest. I am not qualified to speak with authority on Indian thought, but having read these chapters with close attention, I can affirm that Dr. Mukerji's argument is beautifully expended. The thesis of that argument is that the impact of westernisation on Indian thought has resulted in obscuring what was meant by

"bliss" in the Vedanta, and therefore distorting that philosophy. Certainly, ever since I listened to the lectures of Radhakrishnan, it has appeared to me that he greatly distorted the "idealism" of Kant and Hegel to make them seem to be at one with the Vedanta and at the expense of eliminating that mastering modernity which makes them both so revolutionary.

Indeed the English word "ideal" has had much influence in leading to that misunderstanding. It is a modern word and cannot well be used by anybody who takes the ancient traditions seriously. This is seen in the fact that its opposite is the modern word "real". But to Plato—that western thinker who has most in common with the Vedanta, the distinction "ideal-real" would be a distortion. The "idea" was the true reality; idea was not ideal.

Above all, what is particularly wonderful in Dr. Mukerji's book is her enucleation of the ontology of Ananda. This is breathtaking for any western listener. How right it is that the word "Ananda" be translated as bliss. The word "joy" would be too subjective and miss the knowledge that what is spoken of here concerns Being. What has come to be in the dynamic civilisation of North America—indeed in all these societies which express in themselves the thoughts of Locke and Marx, Rousseau or Darwin or Hume—is the restless search for bliss which escapes one because it cannot be known as being itself. Modern life has become the joyless pursuit of joy. One of the truly great stories of the English-speaking world is called "Bliss". (It is also written by a woman). The story recognises beautifully the crying need that bliss be more than the subjectivity of feeling but rooted in the Being of beings. What is more pressing for us westerners than the understanding that there is an ontology of bliss ? That this should be unthinkable is perhaps the greatest price that we have paid for modernity. For those of us who are Christians, it is the elimination of the understanding of the Trinity as bliss which leaves Christianity floundering in the midst of the modernity it so much made. What

(vi)

is sad in the western world is the deep desire to participate in bliss, for instance through the detached pursuit of the orgasm which because it is outside any ontological understanding of bliss results in the good of the pursuit often being blackly negated.

Much silliness has been written in the modern world about the meeting of East and West, by both westerners and easterners. Such a meeting must not sacrifice the greatness of either side—Dr. Mukerji's book understands that the true and authentic Vedanta must not be obscured (albeit temporarily) to make possible that meeting. Both westerners and easterners should read the book with close attention.

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NEO-VEDANTA AND MODERNITY

Part I

Toward an understanding of the Ontology of Bliss in the Context of Modernity

**'How shall I know the supreme unspeakable Bliss which
they realize directly as "This" ? Is it self-effulgent—
or is It seen to be shining distinctly ?'
Katha II. 2-14**

NEO-VEDANTA AND MODERNITY

Part I

Towards an Understanding of the Ontology of Being in the Context of Modernity

How shall I know the supreme unchanging Bliss which
they realize directly as "That"? Is it self-effulgent—
or is it seen to be shining outwardly?
Katha II.2.46

Introduction

It is said very often that Advaita philosophy reflects the general mood of the Indian people. Even when they do not intellectually subscribe to this school of thought, they are drawn into using its terminology as most expressive of their cherished beliefs. This is so because the basis of all understanding regarding life in the world is formulated in the light of a dichotomy obtaining between what is merely pleasing (*preyas*) and what is good (*dreyas*).

This separation runs through all modes of thought, such as monistic, monotheistic or dualistic. The sense of distinction between 'what is agreeable' and 'what should be preferred' pervades the ethos of India and can be recognized immediately in the mood of detachment, or withdrawal, or renunciation, which characterises it. It can be readily understood that a demand for discrimination comes with the built-in implication that one sphere is to be given up in order to appropriate the other.

The ideal of renunciation as a form of knowledge, has been thematized only in the Advaita philosophy of Samkaracarya, the well-known ascetic thinker and writer of the 8th/9th century A.D. All other schools of thought subscribe to it as a high ideal but it is not integral to their philosophy. Samkaracarya, on the other hand, has placed it in the very heart of his writings on the unity of Self (*Atman*) with Ultimate Reality (Brahman). The sphere of the world, together with its knowing subject, the I-consciousness is, as if superimposed on this unity and needs to be 'cancelled' before Brahman as Bliss may be realised as an existential experience.

This supreme discrimination between that which is the area of the not-self and that which leads toward true-

knowledge or self-realization, is called renunciation. It should not be misunderstood to be an act of physical withdrawal from the world, which any way, is not perhaps the best mode of denying the world. The very demand of the world to be considered real and final is called *māyā* in Advaita philosophy; this dimension of non-reality or *māyā* can be offset only by an equally powerful process of meta-physical cancellation, a renouncing of layers of false identification, so that the veil may be set at naught. The inspiration for this trans-natural way of understanding the human condition comes from the Upanishads which speak in the language of poetry to recall man's attention dispersed in the world in search of happiness, to focus it on the quest for the very source of Bliss itself. This is how Samkaracarya has developed his exegeses on the Upanishads and his major work the Commentary on the *Vedānta-Sūtra*.¹

In neo-Vedanta, that is, contemporary interpretations of Samkaracarya's thought, we meet with a very different understanding of '*māyā*' as well as of the philosophical grounding of the Texts of the Upanishads. It will not be perhaps out of place, if Samkaracarya's theory of *māyā* is explained a little here, since, I am going to develop the idea that this very concept has undergone almost a total transformation in the writings of modern thinkers.

The commonly known theory of *māyā* is presented by Samkaracarya in a short Preamble to the Commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtra*. Samkaracarya begins by delineating clearly two disparate spheres : consciousness and the object of consciousness. It is well-known, he writes, that the knower and the known which have for their spheres or contents the notions of 'I' and what is given to it from

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1. A collection of aphorisms beginning with, 'Now commences the enquiry into Brahman'. This work is variously known as *Badarāyaṇa Sūtra*, *Brahma Sūtra* or *Śāstraka Sūtra*.

without, so to speak as 'you', (as the other) respectively, are totally opposed to each other, as light is to darkness. Yet in ordinary usage they are being constantly fused together, as for example, in the statements, 'It is I' or 'It is mine'. That this coupling together is intelligible at all is due to the (unconscious) operation of a kind of superimposition of one on the other which obliterates, phenomenally speaking, the discontinuity altogether. The body and the I-consciousness, become one or even there is identification with persons in the world, like sons etc. To take an obvious example of superimposition: a piece of rope is mistaken as a snake, evoking fear in the heart of the observer. This illusion, which will be known as error only upon its cancellation, is a case of superimposition of one thing on another. Thus is the Self hidden under the identity of the I-consciousness. This obscuration is not apparent but the identification of the I-consciousness with its body ('It is I') or with things in the world ('It is mine') are matters of common experience. It is an error which pervades all human experience. Samkaracarya's definition of this error may be translated into these words.

The cognition into an object of something different which is of the nature of memory of something which has been seen elsewhere.

In other words, the real object is 'falsely' cognised in terms of something previously seen; this cognition is subsequently cancelled when recognition takes place of the real object. The nature of this error is thus indeterminable in the sense that it can be called neither real (because of the possibility of cancellation) nor unreal (because something as such is certainly cognised). Samkaracarya at this point in his writing, makes a passing reference to other theories of error, as inadequate. The reason for grouping together very divergent theories regarding the nature of error is that the admission of this distinction itself is reason enough for stating that error is indeterminable. The aim of the author has been to underscore the

presence of two levels within the cognitive structure, one real and the other unreal ; this is sufficient reason for the argument in favour of a process of superimposition. The author suggests that it seems almost natural for the nature of the real to remain hidden because the unreal, as it were, makes it determinable in its own form of unreality. This figurative ascription (in the form of 'as if') may be called *māyā* which simultaneously hides the real and projects the unreal.

Samkaracarya's intention here in the Preamble is to give an explanation of the experience of a diverse world since the *Vedānta Sūtra* is going to propound Brahman as the One and only Reality. On Brahman is superimposed the dimension of the unreal world which appears as a reality by itself. On the cognitive scale, Brahman as the ever abiding Witness-Self remains hidden because the 'I-consciousness' is superimposed on it. The relevance of this entire discussion about the cognitive structure may be questioned by an opponent who asks : 'If the Witness-Self is aloof from the entire range of the categories of thought as a non-object then how can it be superimposed upon ? Moreover if you also say that the Witness-Self is self-evident then where is the possibility of confounding it with something else ?'

Samkaracarya's resolution of this problem brings him to the core of his Preamble. He writes, 'But, the Witness-Self (*ātman*) is not entirely a non-object. It is the object of consciousness, but only in the sense that it is the ground, which is given in immediate apprehension. Therefore the nature of superimposition or *māyā*, the stuff of which it is, so to speak, made, is ignorance. Due to ignorance a veiling takes place. The way to knowledge is by way of removing this veil of ignorance which is called *avidyā*.¹

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1. For the purposes of a general exposition of the intended views of Samkaracarya attempted here, the subtle distinctions that are made by later Vedānta between *māyā* and *avidyā* or between *avidyā* or *ajñāna* and *mithyājñāna* are glossed over.

We can now see the implication of the doctrine of superimposition. It stands as a prelude to the first aphorism of the Vedānta Sūtra which states : 'Now commences the enquiry into Brahman'. Superimposition is coeval with being-in-the-world, as natural and unquestioned as the statement 'it is I', which lies at the core of life-in-the-world. It is completely simultaneous with it, yet it is not a necessary obstruction which then would so inhere in experience as not to be given to removal. It is a metaphysical predicament, which in fact can be overcome. So the characteristic of superimposition is that it is natural but amenable to 'cancellation'.

According to Samkaracarya, then, the Self or *ātman* is the foundational self-luminous reality as opposed to such relational categories as knowing, enjoying, etc. Superimposition is the false attribution of the relational categories which are applicable only in the sphere of the not-self. Nescience or *avidyā* is primarily this principle of relationality which upholds the superstructure of superimposition created by *māyā*. Brahman, the non-relational ground of all relations is *revealed* only when the relational structure ceases to be operative. Thus there is a close connection between a metaphysical withdrawal on the part of the I-consciousness and the discovery of its ontological ground in immediate apprehension. This explains the Upanishadic statement that Brahman is to be known through knowledge only, because knowledge reveals that which is already there as Reality, by simply cancelling the veil as veil. The dissipation of duality is simultaneous with the realization of the true nature of *ātman* as the Real, the Conscious, Infinite and Bliss Supreme. (*Satyam, jñānam, anantam, ānandam brahma*).

Samkaracarya's Preamble to the *Vedānta Sūtra Bhāṣya* sets the stage for demonstrating the non-reality of anything other than Brahman. *Māyā*, therefore, is integral to the Advaita of Samkaracarya because the concept of *māyā* holds together the ideals of renunciation and Bliss.

It is well known that Samkaracarya's theory of *māyā* did not go unchallenged. Severe criticisms came from the philosophical standpoint of dualism. The great *Vaiṣṇava* teachers of the middle ages emphasized the creaturehood of man, living in a world created by God. Parallel traditions in Vedanta philosophy started by Ramanujacarya, Madhvacharya and others flourished along with the Advaita of Samkaracarya.

In the nineteenth century, India was brought very close to the Western world through the medium of English education which was welcomed by the leaders of society. Indian scholars were much influenced by the metaphysical speculations of the West, especially by Kant who seemed close to the philosophic position of Vedanta regarding Noumenon which lay beyond the categories of thought.

Contemporary philosophical orientations in India show a resurgence of Advaita philosophy. The Advaita of Samkaracarya was presented to the world as the best philosophical achievement of India. The 'modernisation' of Indian thought lies in its being presented in terms of Western Philosophy. Many Indian scholars undertook to define Advaita philosophy in such language as could render it intelligible from the perspective of the Western world. The most popular method of doing this was to write on comparative philosophy. The idea behind this brand of writing seems to be that a familiarity with one dimension of thought would open up possibilities of understanding problems inhering in other modes of thinking. Comparative philosophy as methodology for neo-Vedanta has come to stay in India.

The point of the present study is that the acceptance of comparative philosophy as a valid methodology is based on a disregard for the crucial and irreducible difference between two traditions, as shaped by philosophers in these traditions. There is yet another aspect which is still more crucial for an understanding of an ancient philosophical tradition such as Advaita Vedanta. Indian scholars in seeking to make their

INTRODUCTION

7

heritage commensurable with the Western outlook on life are already placed in a position of losing hold over it, because they have not first examined the grounds on which such changes in their traditions could take place if at all.

This book is devoted to the problem of the Westernisation of Advaita Vedanta which as neo-Vedanta prevails as the philosophy of our own times in India. Neo-Vedanta seeks to give a realistic interpretation of Advaita and also to make it self-sufficient as a philosophy, without recourse to Scriptural texts. According to contemporary Indian thinkers, modernity can be appropriated easily to the universalism of Advaita. Without jettisoning the hard core of the tradition, Advaita could very well be re-stated in terms of modern demands for active participation in the on-going concerns of the world.

Without calling into question the right of any philosopher to interpret Advaita according to his own understanding of it, this study seeks to establish that the process of Westernization has obscured the core of this school of thought. The basic correlation of renunciation and Bliss has been lost sight of in the attempts to underscore the cognitive structure and the realistic structure which according to Samkaracarya should both belong to, and indeed constitute the realm of *māyā*.

An analysis of this process of obscuration forms the subject matter of this book. The first three Chapters are devoted to the study of modernism as it is understood in the West, bringing out the fact that it is not understood as such by Indian thinkers who seek to revitalize their heritage in the light of 'modernity'. Consequently, all attempts at approximating to the West are riddled by this basic confounding of fundamental values. We can see this very clearly in the fact that the concept of renunciation plays no part in the writings of neo-Vedantins; and also that there is no awareness of the advent of secularism as an inevitable corollary to the movement of thought from Kant to Nietzsche in the West. Neo-Vedantins have emphasized concepts of Brahman as Real (*sat*) and

Brahman as Consciousness (cit), but not Brahman as Bliss (ananda) although the three terms together form the common definition of Brahman, that is : *Saccidānanda*.

The influence of Western education on Indian scholars has been profound. An attempt has been made to put this impact in perspective in Chapters Four and Five. In the next three Chapters the writings of two eminent scholars are taken up for detailed study to validate my point that added emphasis has been laid by neo-Vedantins on the concept of Brahman as Reality and Consciousness to the exclusion of Bliss. Both men, A. C. Mukerji and Kokilesvar Bhattacharya were recognised in their own times as accredited spokesmen for Advaita. Both were well-versed in Western Philosophy as teachers of it in the Universities of Allahabad and Calcutta respectively. Both follow in general the guidelines of traditional exegesis but individually develop their own particular points of view. A. C. Mukerji favoured a rationalistic approach to Advaita and Kokilesvar Bhattacharya a 'realistic' approach. Their relevance for this study lies in the fact that according to their own understanding of Advaita it is quite commensurable with concepts to be found in Western thought. It is not that they thematised their exegeses as such but they did attempt to relate Advaita ontology to modern thought.

The point I wish to develop is that the entire intellectual movement, was for contemporary Indian thought, a process of alienation rather than the recovery of an ancient heritage. The Ninth and Tenth Chapters take up the study of this process of transformation of Indian philosophy toward an integration of its understanding of reality with all the new values of our times. Renunciation is nowadays understood by Indian scholars to mean a physical withdrawal from the world, a turning away from involvement and thus leading to moral apathy. Their evaluation of a traditional Indian value can in no way be distinguished from the charge levelled against Indian thought by the Indologists of the nineteenth century.

To demonstrate my point that a total reversal has taken place of the fundamental standpoint of Advaita Vedānta, I have undertaken a study of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* in the last Chapters of the book. In this Text, we meet with an understanding of man and his world. The Text also brings out the uniqueness of man as seeker of the supreme knowledge of Brahman as Bliss. I have followed the Commentary of Samkaracarya on this Text so that it may be seen clearly how the neo-Vedāntins have traversed a different path altogether in staying away from the central teaching of Advaita regarding the non-dual Brahman.

I have sought to reinforce my point by adding, as Part II of this book the translation of a small text on Advaita written in the fourteenth century by a well-known author in this field. I have written an Introduction and commentary on this work, which so far has not been translated into English or into any of the Indian languages. This text, called, the *Taittirīyaka-vidya-prakāśah*, is a commentary on the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* the Text examined in the last two chapters of Part I. A study of the *Taittirīyaka-vidya-prakāśah* reveals the fact that till the author's time the main streams of exegeses were continuing to uphold the tradition as enunciated by Samkaracarya. This may be seen to be in direct contrast to the modern interpreters of Vedānta who seemed to have uncritically envisaged the possibility of revitalising their tradition by incorporating new ideas in order to be in tune with the demands of the times.

It is a well known fact that attempts at re-interpreting the Upanishadic tradition in the light of modern Western thought have not resulted in any major contribution toward meaningful living in our contemporary world. In the following pages an assessment of these attempts is given with a view to clarifying the process of 'modernization' of Indian thought. The study of these exegeses suggests that the emerging scene is of Westernized thought rather than either modern or Indian. This would also explain the

reason behind the dearth of new philosophical schools in our country. This book, in effect, seeks to highlight the question, namely, is it right to say that renunciation has been central to the teaching of the Upanishads; and if so, in what way, or if at all, this teaching can be related to the contemporary way of life in India ?

Chapter One

The Framework for Modernity : The Western Tradition

A. Modernisation and Westernisation

In Eastern countries and especially in India, the term 'modernity' is used very often to denote the progress-oriented ethos of our times. 'Modernisation' is accepted as integral to life at present and a matter of coming to terms with Western modes of thinking and living in the fast changing world of scientific and technological innovations. 'Modernisation', therefore is almost a synonym for Westernisation. The West is admired for its air of success in all aspects of human endeavour and its ideal of constant striving toward better achievements. The marvellous inventions of science evoke nothing but a strong spirit of emulation and the desire to bring about such changes in the existing way of life as would make it possible for all viable cultural and social transformations to take place to accomodate them. In contrast with the very tangible ills which plague the lives of people elsewhere the progressive affluence of the West appears nothing but a good in itself. For a people who are fighting for sheer survival, or freedom, or human rights, the West could symbolise Utopia. 'Modernisation', in this sense merely means the free exercise of an option toward greater mechanisation for the sake of economic development. Its main sphere of influence, which admittedly is secular, is seen to lie only in the region of praxis. No anxiety is felt about a possible radicalization of the theories which sustain our tradition.

To an outsider to Western Civilization, therefore, the following question would sound merely rhetorical :

Why, in our time have societies wellendowed with industrial plenty and scientific genius turned uglier with totalitarian violence than any barbarous people ?Why do nihilism and neuroses brood over what we please to call the 'developed' societies, taking as great a toll of human happiness as gross physical privation in the third world ?¹

No such misgivings, regarding our own future in following the West is in evidence in the writings of Indian thinkers. No doubts regarding encounter with science from within the tradition has been voiced since its advent on Indian soil. Rather to the contrary; science and religion are accepted as 'complementary disciplines,' which can be "combined harmoniously(for) an all-round expression of human genius and total fulfilment."²

The two terms 'Modernization' and 'Westernization', are used interchangeably in India, but the difference in meaning is so crucial that any slurring over could lead only to meaninglessness. At this point in time, Westernization is a global event, but Modernization so far is a Western experience. In order to understand what modernity means to people who are obliged to be modern, it is necessary to understand the paradox of a life of affluence overcast by the shadow of 'nothingness'.

It would seem to the East that the rapidly proliferating advances of modern sciences are so many steps in the right direction. The technological discoveries which are the

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1. Theodore Roszak, *Where the Wasteland Ends : Politics and Transcendence in Post Industrial Society* (London : Faber & Faber, 1973), p xxviii.
 2. Swami Ranganathananda, *Science and Religion* (Calcutta Advaita Ashram, 1978), p 3. (Inaugural Address for the Lecture Series on "Science, Society and the Scientific Attitude," University of Bangalore, August 5, 1976).

marvels of our day, are surely of great benefit to human society. It is true that some hazards are created by the growing techniques, but then, the technicians are never at a loss for adequate solutions to the problems. When such is our present situation, how should we understand a passage like this :

People everywhere trace, and record the decay, the destruction, the imminent annihilation of the world.....The world, men find, is not just out of joint but tumbling away into the nothingness of absurdity. Nietzsche, who from his supreme peak saw far ahead of it all, as early as the eighteen-eighties had for it the simple because thoughtful words : 'The Wasteland grows...'¹

There are many brilliant writers in the West who have in varied measure, made the theme of 'nothingness' their central concern. The poignant words of Nietzsche have been echoing and re-echoing in such writings as these :

.....there is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express...²

or,

The greatest mystery is not that we have been flung at random between the profusion of matter and of the stars, but that within this prison we can draw from ourselves images powerful enough to deny our nothingness.³

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1. Martin Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking*, tr. J. Glenn Gray (New York : Harper and Row, 1972), p. 29.
 2. Samuel Beckett, in *Twentieth Century Views*, ed. M. Esslin, (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc, 1965), p. 17.
 3. Andre Malraux, *Anti-Memoirs* (New York : The Modern Library), p. 21.

The question arises why should a progressive civilization find itself facing 'nothingness' in the present age. This question becomes supremely significant for all such societies who are eagerly following in the footsteps of the West. The East would reject the idea outright that it is trying to inherit 'a growing Wasteland', but Western contemporary literature is clearly held in a tension between an awareness of crisis which is overtaking their civilization and a fearful sense of responsibility that its last sweeping technological conquest of the world will be final and irrevocable. They can only watch helplessly, the eager march toward the same existential nausea¹ on the part of the East from which the West is beginning to suffer now.

The important point with regard to modernity, therefore, is the kind of awareness it awakens in man by which he understands himself in relation to his world. The term implies an evaluation of the situation in which Western man finds himself today. The primary demand of modernity, then, is to provide meaning to living in the age of technology; meaning that is hard to come by in an age which has destroyed the region of transcendence that had sustained

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1. 'Existential nausea has always worried the rich; democracy has now put it within the reach of all'. Dennis Gabor, 'Fighting Existential Nausea', *Technology and Human Values* (California: Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966), p. 13.

John Wilkinson, in his Introduction to the same book writes that in justice to American Students it must be pointed out that 'the progressive assimilation to the machine of human values (and even of religion in the sense of a *deus in machina*) is a function of a decisive unforeseen and unforeseeable turn of western Culture in its successive passage through mercantilism, industrialism, automation, and cybernation, and that as these mutations take place elsewhere in the world the same pathology of value is manifested'. Ibid., p. 3.

man over the centuries. To a lot of people this contingency may sound immensely preferable to any kind of historicism (whether theological, philosophical or humanistic) as it seems to grant freedom to bring about such conditions as are needed for the well-being of society and also for building the future of our dreams. The thinkers who are aware of the implications of modernity, however, understand that this prospect is likely to be an ever-receding horizon unless one is dreaming of a totally man-made world replacing the given natural one of today. The very nature of technology creates its own autonomous sphere of action. Decisions are necessarily a-moral in a situation where techniques and expertise have to be given preference. Modernity accepts the fact that a new state of affairs has come into being with technology, because 'the moral discourse of 'values' and 'freedom' is not independent of the will to technology, but a language fashioned in the same forge together with the will to technology. To try to think them separately is to move more deeply into their common origin.'¹

This would seem to mean that our future will be determined by technology which cannot but be indifferent to those qualities which we knew so far to be peculiarly 'human'. Philosophy as a mode of questioning the beliefs which guide our life, requires a separation of man from his environment. Modernity spells out the end of philosophy because technology now is closing this crucial gap. Modernity is self-conscious about moving into this region of unification from whence no questioning may arise. Heidegger writes clearly :

Philosophy is ending in the present age. It has found its place in the scientific attitude of socially active humanity. But the fundamental characteristic of this scientific attitude is its cybernetic. That is, its technological character. The need to ask about technology is presu-

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1. George Grant, *Technology and Empire* (Toronto : House of Anansi, 1969), p. 32.

mably dying out to the same extent that technology more definitely characterizes and regulates the appearance of the totality of the world and the position of man in it.¹

Modernity means an awareness of technology as a mode of knowing which seems to be replacing familiar moulds of thought. These problems are not present in the East, because so far it has not progressed beyond asking first-order questions, regarding methodology and scientific procedure. We therefore, cannot understand what it is to be modern; or to be obliged to face the possibility of the annihilation of man. We are at the stage of a commonsense understanding of technology as the latest development in the process of scientific discovery while the occasional opposition it evokes is dismissed as nothing but the natural tendency toward conservatism in us. Outcry against innovation is nothing new; the timid are always wary of radical changes, always convinced that nothing but disaster can result from total transformations. Against this negative attitude one hears the enthusiastic approval of those who hail every new breakthrough in technology as another landmark in human achievement. The question for us is not, whether to be cautioned by the first group or reassured by the second, but to realize that to enter this debate at all is already not to understand the nature of technology.

In this chapter, an attempt is made to enter into the concerns of Western philosophers who seek to bring home to us the implication of being obliged to live in the age of technology. In order to do so, we need to familiarise ourselves with the formative influences within the Western tradition which has culminated in the age of technology; only thus can we hope to realize what it means to be modern, or what Rene Guenon means when he writes :

...however affield the state of mind which has been specifically designed as 'Modern' may have spread,

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1. Martin Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, tr. Joan Stambaugh (New York : Harper & Row, 1972), p. 58.

especially in recent years, and however strong may be the hold which it has taken and which it exercises ever more completely at least externally, over the whole world, this state of mind remains nevertheless purely Western in origin : in the West it had its birth, and the West was for a long time its exclusive domain. In the East its influence will never be any thing but a Westernization.¹

It is necessary for us to understand the Western tradition in order to begin to see how integral science and technology are to its culture, and may be also understand the reason why the East remained untouched by this form of quest for knowledge. This survey of the Western tradition is necessarily brief and therefore very partial. However, it is hoped that the simplified nature of the presentation highlights the points of departure which should be studied carefully by those thinkers in the East, who are interested in comparative studies.

B. Formative Factors Influencing Western Civilization :

The cradle of Western tradition is ancient Greece² which brought forth great men of noble deeds and brilliant thought. The understanding this ancient society had of itself cannot be recorded as part of the history of the times.³ The ancient world had its own way of understanding the occurrences which commanded attention, such as events of great significance in the lives of heroic men. Their achievements were landmarks which served to inspire

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1. *René Guénon*, Writings tr. and ed. by Lord Northbourne (London : Luzac and Company, Ltd., 1952), p. 15.
 2. Frederick S. J. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Vol. I, part I (New York : Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962), p. 29.
 3. Karl Loewith *Meaning in History* (The University Chicago Press, 1949), pp. 4-5.

and encourage other men to emulation. Celebration of those deeds by recounting them in poetry and drama made them moral imponderables; imponderable, because nobility was closely allied to tragedy. The mystique of man's relationship with nature's inscrutable ways was perpetuated in the recounting of the tales of antiquity. This 'history' is almost a reliving of the past and a continuation of the order of nature in human affairs. Nature, according to tradition, was good and man, as the measure of all things was a natural event, albeit the most exalted one. The inheritors of the Greek heritage agree that :

Through and through, the ideal is unity. To make the individual at one with the state, the real with the ideal, the inner with the outer, art with moral, finally to bring all phases of life under the empire of a single idea, which with Goethe, we may call, as we will, the good, the beautiful, or the whole—this was the aim, and, to a great extent, the achievement of their genius.¹

The West has experienced many exhilarating moments of emancipation from its past, not the least among them is the overcoming of the religious mythology which had combined nature and man in a harmonious whole. Nature, as we now understand the word was 'discovered' by philosophers in ancient Greece. Nature was found not to be full of spirits and thus mysterious and inscrutable, but rather, obedient to knowable and predictable laws.² This was the beginning

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1. G. Lowes Dickinson, *The Greek View of Life* (New York : Collier Books, 1961), p. 155.
 2. The phrase 'discovery of Nature' was used by F.M. Cornford, who explains it thus : "The Ionian cosmogonists assume ... that the whole universe is natural and potentially within the reach of knowledge as ordinary and rational as our knowledge that fire burns and water drowns. That is what I meant by the discovery of

of that separation of man and nature which subsequently divided them completely into the two orders of the knower and the known and later of the maker and the made.

The spirit of scientific inquiry did not develop unimpeded; the quest for the ever-fading region of transcendence sometimes eclipsed it. The Platonic separation of the regions of appearance and reality, inaugurated a new line of enquiry which continues to parallel the tradition of questioning nature to its furthest limits. In other words, Plato's line of separation was drawn differently from that of the natural cosmogonists preceding him. Man, for Plato, was possessed of that reason which could lead him to the vision of the Real and the Good. Nature, therefore, was not exhausted in discovering causes for events, it remained grounded in the eternal order of Forms. The soul of man was activated by the same principle which activated nature. Nature was not merely a neutral object of enquiry but necessarily related to the well-being of man. By focussing on the unchanging ground behind the changing order of existence, the Platonic tradition had acted as a break on the process of alienation between man and nature.¹

The other source of Western civilization is held to be Hebraism, specifically in the form of Christianity. According to Mathew Arnold, in some ways Hellenism and Hebraism were rival forces, 'dividing the empire of the world between them.' He writes that 'between these two points

Nature The supernatural, as fashioned by mythology, simply disappears; all that really exists is natural." *Before and After Socrates* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1964), p. 15.

1. Benjamin Jowett writes : "Nature in the aspect which she presented to a Greek philosopher of the fourth century before Christ is not easily reproduced to modern eyes. The associations of mythology and poetry have to be added and the unconscious influence of science has

of influence 'moves our world.'¹ They remained rivals because reason and faith were never quite reconciled in the history of succeeding generations. The advent of Christianity in the West changed the understanding of nature in relation to man. The dimension of historical consciousness replaced the idea of the manifestation of the natural order in recurring cycles. The 'Christian reversal' as Hannah Arendt calls it, introduced a new quality of self-centredness.

..... in Christianity neither the world nor the recurring cycle of life is immortal, only the single living individual. It is the world which will pass away; men will live forever.²

Inevitably, perhaps, the eschatological dimension of life minimised the importance of nature. The emphasis was now on man, not only as the measure of all things but as one to whom in effect, is given the world to enjoy and also to inherit the Kingdom of God.³ The fast rise and spread of Western powers strengthened the sense of destiny and an unquestioning faith in the goodness of Providence. This new quality of self-centredness introduced by Christianity created a suitable atmosphere for questioning the workings of nature. Answers could be wrested from nature for the betterment of mankind. Quite paradoxically, therefore, it was Christianity

to be subtracted, before we can behold the heavens or the earth as they appeared to the Greek." Introduction: *Timaeus, The Dialogues of Plato*, Vol. III (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 380.

1. Mathew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, ed. J. Doyer Wilson (Cambridge: The University Press, 1935), p. 121.
2. Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York: The Viking Press, 1961), p. 52.
3. E. Troeltsh, *Protestantism and Progress* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966), pp. 160-163.

THE FRAMEWORK FOR MODERNITY

which created a milieu for the conquest of nature although apparently it was opposed to the scientific spirit of inquiry into the workings of nature. The paradox may be explained if we consider, opposition came from reverence for dogma rather than for nature. The ancient philosophers who had asked the first questions and who had remained eclipsed by the Platonic tradition, now stood vindicated. It can be said further that the opposition between science and religion was resolved in a strange way by philosophy. It may be a simplification, but not entirely farfetched, to say that the two great philosophers, Kant and Hegel, mediated between science and religion in a fashion which has definitively affected the course of Western thought since their time.

The first major step in the coming of the Age of Reason could be said to be the refutation of the traditional proofs of God's existence by Kant and the establishment of the supremacy of the moral law as the only object of reverence. According to Kant, man alone, amongst all other creatures, prescribes for himself a law of conduct which is good; it is good not only because it is obeyed out of reverence for the law itself, but because it is the one law which can act as a safeguard against the evil propensities inherent in the nature of man. If man were devoid of reason, he would not be in conflict regarding the "ought". If on the other hand he were purely a rational being, then the "ought" would resolve itself into the "must" of natural laws. Virtue lies in becoming so attuned to the command of moral law that obedience becomes akin to an upholding of the law in one's behaviour. In other words, man's disposition is to be changed by the moral law. This alone can make men worthy of happiness. This law, it is true, commands without promise of reward, but it is unthinkable, indeed irrational, to suppose that virtue will not bring about a state of happiness. The union of virtue and happiness is the highest good envisaged by reason and the demand for this comes from the moral law itself. Nature is indifferent to this concomitance; therefore, the sole source of

this happiness is God. In the words of Kant "..... It is morally necessary to assume the existence of God."¹

Kant has here reversed the traditional relation between morality and religion. The result of this re-orientation of the argument for God's existence has been far reaching in Western tradition.² E. L. Fackenheim writes that the peaceful co-existence of reason and Revelation was upset by Kant's revolutionary theory. Moral autonomy is bought at a price. "The same act which appropriates the God-given moral law reduces its God-giveness to irrelevance."³ In other words, in a world made vulnerable to secularity by scientific discoveries, Kant provided the clue to moral independence. By granting him a self-legislating will, he made possible the phenomenon of man, master of his own destiny and standing alone at the crossroads of history.

Kant had upset the balance between reason and Revelation. Hegel by combining them, in an unprecedented way finally ushered in that age of secularity, which has come to stay in Western tradition. In the wonderful architectonic of Hegelian philosophy, the eschatological fulfilment of Christianity is transformed into the dialectical movement of the world-spirit, moving inevitably toward self-realization in the future. History itself is divinised and made to lead up

1. *The Critique of Practical Reason*, Book II, Chapter II, tr. by L. Beck (The Library of Liberal Arts, 1956), p. 130.
2. After Kant "the proud name of an ontology which presumed to give in a systematic doctrine, synthetic knowledge *a priori* of things in general, must give place to the modest name of a mere analysis of pure understanding." Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant and Goethe* (New York : Harper Torchbooks, 1963), p. 95.
3. E.L. Fackenheim, "The Revealed Morality of Judaism and Modern Thought : A Confrontation with Kant. *Quest for Past and Future* (London and Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 215.

to the historical situation in which Hegel found himself, and which, for him was the peak of cultural advancement.¹ "In this last stage of the history of the European spirit pure free will, is finally produced, which itself both wills, knows what it wills," writes Karl Loewith.²

Hegel's understanding of history is of the greatest importance because for almost one century it was he who set the tone for European philosophy either through his followers or his critics. In him was completed the substitution of Christianity by an overriding faith in the historical destiny of European man. History, therefore, was not entirely what had happened but what could be made to happen. This secularization of the religious vision of salvation, brought into vogue the many philosophies of history which supplanted Biblical faith. Western civilization for centuries had been sustained by faith in the past; the message of charity toward all fellow men as we hope for mercy from God; and a hope for the future in which was promised salvation. For religion to be meaningful, a teleological setting was necessary. By conferring fluidity to the dimension of truth,³ Hegel guaranteed that a quality of religiousity would pervade all theories of progress which became current since his time.⁴

The nineteenth century saw the dislodgement of religion from its pivotal role in human life, and an upsurge of confidence in progressive involvement in the life of the world.

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1. Karl Loewith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, tr. David E. Green (New York; Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1967), pp. 32-33.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
 3. H.H. Berger, *Progressive and Conservative Man* (Pittsburg Duquesne University Press, 1971), p. 34.
 4. Quoting Prof. Bury, Carl Becker writes '.....however formulated with whatever apparatus of philosophic or scientific terminology defended, the doctrine (of progress) was in essence an emotional conviction, a

Man, for the first time, knew himself to be the creator and maker of the future. The material well-being made possible by scientific discoveries and actualised by the Industrial Revolution was not unwelcome to the men of an age of expanding horizons. This manner of good life could be easily aligned to a life of obedience to the Divine Will because men saw themselves as the chosen liberators of the entire world. According to Carl Becker :

The long treasured vision of a Golden Age once identified with the creation of the world by capricious, inscrutable gods, and then transferred to the beatific life after death in the Heavenly City, is at last identified with the progressive amelioration of man's earthly state by the application of his intelligence to the mastery of the outer world of things and to the conscious and rational direction of social activities.¹

The nineteenth century, flew by on the wings of a great enthusiasm for new discoveries in the various fields of human enterprise. It is recognized as the age of progress²;

species of religion—a religion which according to Prof. Bury, served as a substitute for the declining faith in the Christian doctrine of Salvation.' *Progress and Power* (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 7.

1. Carl Becker, *The Heavenly City* (New Haven : Yale University Press, 1947), p. 85.
2. The idea of progress, first explicitly stated by Condorcet in the eighteenth century, viewed material well-being as essential to individual liberty and peace. "In the course of the nineteenth century, when man could see about them concrete evidence of advance in liberty and material goods, the idea of progress became an accepted part of our value system."

Melvin Kranzberg, "Technology and Human Values," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, XL, No. 4, 1964, p. 589.

as the age when Utopia was felt to be within grasp¹; as the age of reason which set man free from the tyranny of religious dogma; and as the age of humanism, when for the first time man knew himself to be the measure of all things, not because he was given this position by nature or God but because he had discovered it for himself and had accepted the full responsibility of such an exalted state.

The dissipation of this self-reliance marks the advent of the present century. The crucial fact of contemporary Western world is a loss of faith in the ideals which had guided previous generations. Christopher Dawson writes :

Of all the changes that the twentieth century has brought, none goes deeper than the disappearance of that unquestioning faith in the future and the absolute value of our civilization which was the dominant note of the nineteenth century.²

Those who seek to understand Nietzsche are not puzzled by the quick dissipation of the euphoric optimism of the nineteenth century. The inherent contradiction in holding together a belief in God as the supreme dispenser of Grace and an over-riding confidence in one's will to conquer, had been foreseen clearly by Nietzsche. He knew that in due course the will to create would replace a 'waiting upon'; that the divinising of history as the progressive destiny of mankind would lead to the jettisoning of God as irrelevant to this process. Just as the spreading wasteland swallows up definitive paths, so must the human will overcome that region of

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1. Herbert J. Mueller writes : "In our civilization the idea of progress led to a novel utopianism, the conviction that the ideal society was positively going to be established on earth.

The Children of Frankenstein (Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press, 1971), p. 369.

2. Caristopher Dawson, *The Dynamics of World History* (London : Sheed and Ward, 1957), p. 54.

knowing which forms a part of receiving from the 'Other'. The philosopher who had given this power to human will, was of course, Immanuel Kant¹. His importance now becomes clear because it is evident that the heir to 'the Wasteland' was created by him.

How recognizable, how familiar to us, is the man so beautifully portrayed in the *Grundlegung*, who confronted even with Christ turns away to consider the judgement of his own conscience and to hear the voice of his own reason...this man is with us still, free, independent, lonely, powerfull, rational, responsible, brave, the hero of so many novels and books of moral philosophy.²

The question which demands attention here is why should living in the twentieth century be an experience of alienation for Western man when paradoxically, he has all the means for increasing affluence and power, as well as a strongly institutionalized religion which can act as a unifying force for the entire Christian World ?

As stated earlier, it is important for us to understand this question because we now are a part of Western civilization. An attempt to answer this question is made in the next Chapter.

1. Contrasting the placid outward life of Kant with "his world destroying thought", the poet Heine wrote : "Of a truth, if the citizens of Konigsberg had had any inkling of the meaning of that thought, they would have shuddered before him as before an executioner." Quoted by E. W. F. Tomlin, *The Western Philosophers* (London : Hutchinson & Co., (Publishers) Ltd., 1968) p. 202.
2. Iris Murdoch. *The Sovereignty of Good* (London : Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), p. 80.

Chapter Two

Science, Technology and Automation

The crucial factor which separates this century from the previous one, in the West is the failure of history. During the years when science was bringing in more and more mechanisation, man knew himself to be alienated from nature. After the world wars man felt alienated from history as well.

The failure of history in the West is to be understood as an experience of the greatest moment. A belief in history meant the possibility of sustenance from a region which is beyond human fallibility, a faith in Providence which ordained events for mankind, ensured the continuity of moral values and added to the meaningfulness of striving for the goal of establishing perfect justice on earth. The two world-wars, in their total irrationality, destroyed, in a most dramatic fashion, all the expectations which had been built up over the previous centuries. An expression of this post-war mood can be read in the following lines :

Our Godhead, History has tilled a tomb for us,
from which there is no resurrection.¹

The dissipation of the dimension of transcendence which had sustained man after he had separated from nature and had alienated himself from religion, is described as the "overcoming of chance" by Leo Strauss. By chance is meant the possibility of an interference which remains beyond

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1. Ingeborg Bachmann, "Message" tr. M. L. Mandelson, *Modern European Poetry* (New York : Bantam Books, 1966), p. 175.

human control. We may call it, Fate, Providence, Grace or by any other name. The future remains shrouded in mystery if chance reigns supreme, otherwise past, present and future become linked together by necessity. Strauss identifies the quality of 'chanceless existence' with the reality of modernity. Specifically, modernity is understood as the secularization of Christian eschatology. According to Strauss this was accomplished in three stages, which he calls the three waves of modernity. In classical thought justice is compliance with the natural order. Later the element of chance is provided for in the benign inscrutability of Providence. The complete overcoming of chance came with Machiavelli, Hobbes and Kant. The fallibility of human order could be transformed by (i) judicious manipulations, (ii) exercise of the rights of self-preservation, and (iii) complete obedience to the moral law. The dependence on Divine Grace is totally suspended as unnecessary; man's creativity supercedes inspiration; nature is conquered by science and human efforts are enough to bring about perfectability :

.....eventually we arrive at the view that universal affluence and peace is the necessary and sufficient condition of perfect justice.¹

The perfectability of man and the establishment of peace and justice on earth continued to suffice as ideals (as they still do) for those humanists of the twentieth century who had not reckoned with the means for the attainment of this end.

A new factor was introduced by the advent of science which started to create an 'unnatural' order of existence. There is, therefore, in the West now a brand of literature devoted to propounding the problem of the means of achieving felicity as being sufficient ends in themselves. This brings us to a possible answer to the problem of anxiety in the

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1. Leo Strauss, "The Three Waves of Modernity". *Political Philosophy*, ed. Hilail Gildin (New York : The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1975), pp. 88-89.

present century in the West. The modern era is the subject of many kinds of analyses but all agree on the importance of technology as the most commanding influence at work in all societies. Although we are familiar with the phenomenon of technology, it is not always understood in its full significance. Jacques Ellul writes :

No social, human or spiritual fact is so important as the fact of technique in the modern world. And yet no subject is so little understood.¹

Ellul's judgement is only too true because technology is so complex and vast a subject that a comprehensive understanding of its ramifications would be a formidable task. A brief account is undertaken here only with a view to highlighting certain notions which are important for the thesis being presented here.

It is a generally felt impression that technology is the newest development in the growth of scientific knowledge. It is only a tendency toward conservatism which make us look askance at the sudden spate of new inventions. This reactionary attitude is common both to the East as well as to the West and E. G. Mesthene describes it very clearly in these terms :

Why not stop it all ? Stop automation : Stop tampering with life and heredity : Stop the senseless race into space : The cry is an old one. It was heard no doubt when the wheel was invented. The technologies of the bomb, the automobile, the spinning jenny, gunpowder, printing, all provoked social dislocation accompanied by similar cries of 'Stop'...²

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1. Jacque Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York : knopf, 1964), p. 3.
 2. E.G. Mesthene, "Technology and Wisdom;" in *Philosophy and Technology*, ed. C. Mitcham and R. Mackey (New York : The Free Press, 1972) p. 113.

The author E. G. Mesthene compares the twentieth century with the early time of Greek civilization. The scientific exploration of the first Cosmologists had not been developed properly because they had lacked courage to follow up the sudden glimpses into the unknown which had rewarded their efforts. Gilbert Murray wrote that it was a failure of nerve on the part of the early Greeks which prevented them from pushing ahead with their study of nature.¹

Mesthene cites the phrase, 'the failure of nerve,' used by Gilbert Murray in order to warn the twentieth century against becoming open to the same charge. He thinks, we are now given the same choice of either proceeding with the quest for greater knowledge or to stop midway from a want of courage to face the unknown.

We are convinced again, for the first time since the Greeks of the essential intelligibility of the universe : there is nothing in it that in principle is unknowable.²

Mesthene voices the opinion of many who think that with proper control and good management toward beneficial ends, technology may be used for the betterment of society; that, it is a a-moral neutral power, which can be used to good purpose by a responsible government.

According to Bertrand de Jouvenal, membership in a technologically advanced and advancing society is a privilege. It is characteristic of all privileges that they may be put to good use or bad use.³

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1. Gilbert Murray, *The Five Stages of Greek Religion* (New York : Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1951), pp. 119-165.
 2. E. G. Mesthene, "Technology and Wisdom," in *Philosophy and Technology*, *op cit.*, p. 114.
 3. Bertrand de Jouvenal "Some Musings," *Technology and Human Values* (California : Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966), p. 23.

With a sense of collective responsibility, therefore, technology could be used in the best interests of mankind. Most people in the West and nearly all in the East could be convinced by Mesthene's arguments against harboring any undue fear of change, and easily identify with the idea that the answer to the problem of the technological take-over does not lie in crying a halt to it but in getting better control of the world as a technological system. M.W. Thring writes :

We are well aware, now, that.....the wider development of the nineteenth century Industrial Revolution, has been a bolting horse out of control, and that we are all on its back. We know that we must find a way to grasp the reins and control the steed, and make it trot, rather than gallop, in the direction we need to go.¹

This attitude easily aligns technology on the side of progress and does not consider that man's autonomy is threatened by it. It finds ready support with the majority of people because we are used to the idea of bettering ourselves in every possible way. As a matter of fact the need for a defense of technology itself would not have arisen had it not "created a battered landscape of eroded soil, broken bottles and automobile tires which tells another story of technology from that dream of a thriving industrial world set within a barely tamed wilderness that spurred on our ancestors."²

The problem of waste, pollution and devastation which comes as an aftermath to technological proliferation provides no doubt some urgency to the pleas and suggestions for greater control over new invention, but there is here a core of optimism in direct continuation with the nineteenth

1. *Man, Machines and Tomorrow* (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), pp. 117-18.
2. William Kuhns, *The Post-Industrial Prophets* (New York : Weybright and Tulley, 1971), p. 2.

century belief in progress. Those who have been so far "sustained by a profound belief in the doctrine of progress,"¹ extend it to encompass technology as well. The idea of continuous innovation is so familiar, writes Demczynske, that we can hardly imagine life in a static society. We try to make every thing better, whether it is our industrial wares, standards of living or social institutions.² It is true that twentieth century optimism is very tempered as compared to that of the earlier century, yet it remains a force to be reckoned with, because it is a force which provides sustenance to developing countries and feeds the opinion which maintains the neutrality of technology. Since the time that Prometheus stole fire from the gods, any act of daring for the sake of knowledge and power has acquired an aura of nobility in the west. It is in

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1. Carl Becker, *Progress and Power* (New York : Random House, 1965), p. 6.
 2. S. Demczynske, *Automation and the Future of Man* (London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1964), p. 162. This rush toward betterment is described by Theodore Roszak from another perspective : " We have a name for the sort of human activity that absorbs people in the orderly pursuit of arbitrary.....usually competitive.....goals according to arbitrary rules. We call it a 'game'. *Why* must an economy grow, *why* must profit be maximized, *why* must every beaurocracy expand and concentrate control, *why* must scientific truth and organizational efficiency and industrial productivity be ceaselessly elaborated ?" Roszak writes that these questions have no rational explanation just as there are no logical reasons about the rules of games which must be accepted as ultimate in case the game is going to be played. "Forbidden Games", *Technology and Human Values*. California : Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1966), p. 26

this context that one can appreciate Mesthene's urging us against a failure of nerve at this moment in history.

The question to be considered here is whether this commonly prevailing opinion regarding technology should be seen in the light of a different perspective altogether or not. In a way it is a reassuring theory that technology brings about radical changes and so demands greater accountability from society, in order that this tremendous force may be harnessed for the good of mankind.¹ Yet this theory has been countered very pressingly by thinkers; who do not subscribe to the view that technology is just the practical aspect of science. Sociologists for one, have pointed out that man was a technician before he was a scientist.² Man was aware of, and could work with techniques before he discovered the universal laws which governed them. In the fashioning of crude stone implements lay the seed of future technology; but this manipulative behaviour was a part of a natural struggle for existence, not radically different from the use of claws and tooth by an animal. Lewis Mumford distinguishes between the crude means of self-preservation from sophisticated techniques which aim at greater comfort and are production-oriented rather than life-oriented :

At its point of origin, then, technics was related to the whole nature of man. Primitive

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1. A typical opinion would be : "The transferred technology is forcing changes in the social and economic structure of countries everywhere. This has been so in the past, and it will continue to be true in the future. The problem is one of coming to terms with the new technology and of better organizing the world as a technological system. Spencer, Daniel L. *Technology Gap in Perspective : Strategy of International Technology Transfer* (New York : Spartan Books, 1970), p. 162.
 2. Lewis Mumford, "Technics and the Nature of Man," *Philosophy and Technology*, *op cit.*, pp. 77-79.

technics was life-centred, not narrowly work-centred, still less productive-centred.¹

Science came later and supplied greater power to the already existing technological pattern of man's manipulative behaviour. Feibleman goes further to say that the preoccupation with technology has done a lot of harm to the development of science, because more often science has to engage itself with matters arising out of the uses of machines. According to him the role of science has been to improve instruments and techniques and vastly accelerate efficiency, thus helping technology to become a branch of applied science; but this rapidly growing branch is hardly conducive to the progress of pure science.²

The argument regarding the relation of science to technology is of interest, because not only is a wedge being driven here between what is considered worthwhile in itself and what is of practical use only, but it is being felt as an ever-widening gulf which is developing a dynamics of its own. Pure science now seems as wary of technology as are the humanities. The reasons are not far to seek. The scientist looks upon himself as an enquirer after truth. His methodology is distinct, but according to a few scientists, not very different from the speculative, contemplative, or even insightful ways of the humanities and is essentially an extension of the same desire for knowledge which started the first philosophers on the path of metaphysics. Andrew G. Van Melsen writes :

..... knowing and making lie in the same line; both mean man's self-realization, one, in an imminent way and the other in a transient fashion. Both go out to the world but both also revert to man. For in knowledge man

1. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

2. J. K. Feibleman, 'Pure Science, Applied Science and Technology,' *Philosophy & Technology*, *op cit.*, pp. 36-39.

appropriates the world to himself immanently as an enrichment of his spirit; in technological making he appropriates the same world to himself to humanise it, and at the same time he learns to know himself in a new way...¹

To take into consideration another view which says that "knowing and making" lie in the same line, we may cite from the writings of Friedrich Dessauer. According to Dessauer, the inventor mediates between two realms, one of man's intellectual structures and conceptualities arising out of his needs and the other of the mysterious world of natural laws. The essence of invention lies in finding that which was not manifest before in the world of actuality, as for example like a poem or a picture created by a poet or an artist.

The inventor does not view what has been gained from his creation (though not from it alone) with the feeling "I have made you".....

but, rather, with an "I have found you....."²

There are other eminent architects and engineers who do not care for the distinction between the natural and the artificial : R. Buckminster Fuller, writes in a poetic form on the subject of the new profiles of the universe where nature and artifice merge into each other.³

Taking the new image of the world into consideration, some scientists plead for a closer relation⁴ between science

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1. Andrew G. Van Melsen, *Science & Technology* (Pittsburg : Duquesne University Press, 1961), p. 319.
 2. Friedrich Dessauer, "Technology in the Proper Sphere," *Philosophy & Technology, op cit.*, p. 323.
 3. R. Buckminster Fuller, *No More Secondhand God*, (New York : Anchor Books, 1971).
 4. "Knowledge is an integral entity and cannot be definitely divided without finally becoming meaningless and useless.....The balance between science and humanities must be maintained throughout." S. Demczynski,

and philosophy. P. W. Bridgman, in an oft printed article¹ rejects the view that there is a radical difference between science and the humanities, even going to the extent of maintaining that although values are not definitive for science, concern for values is as important to the scientist as to any philosopher. Bridgman thinks that science can save the humanities from much dissipation of energy in speculating about regions which clearly lie beyond the thinking power of man.² It is time we learn to look to the future *which will be dominated by technology* rather than try to effect any "return" to the insights of the past, because,

The insight that there is any problem here at all is devastatingly new in human history. The sciences and the humanities find themselves facing the problem together; it is too difficult and too pressing to permit the luxury of a division of forces.³

The exegetical value of following these interpretations add to our understanding that "knowing" and "making" lie in one line for science and technology, an interpretation which is being questioned by philosophers. Moreover, speaking specifically the call for a closing of ranks against technology, hardly means a new dimension of understanding because science would like to change the humanities into its own image before they could be made useful for modern students. Max Black considers such presuppositions as 'man has an essential nature', or that 'this human essence is good', outdated and other such maxims in need of substantial revision. He goes.

Automation & the Future of Man (London : George, Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1964), pp. 207-209.

1. P. W. Bridgman, "Quo Vadis," *Science and Ideas*, ed. A.B. Arons and A.M. Bork (New Jersey : Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964).

Also in *Science & the Modern Mind*, ed. G. Holton (New York : Books for Libraries Press, 1977), p. 323.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 277.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 278.

on to say that new perspectives have to be created before the two languages of science and the humanities can become commensurable, because 'the personal equation', which is crucial to the one is sought to be neutralized by the other.¹ Further, for science, as Van Melsen pointed out "knowing" and "making" lie in the same line, and this would seem to be the crucial point of departure for philosophy.

Science which has made technology possible, cannot perhaps contemplate fruitfully its own effectiveness. We may however appreciate the point that the sciences being the study of the real and the natural are closer to the humanities than to technology which sets its sights, at least in a minimal sense on creating the artificial. Our increasingly man-made environment, which is the devastatingly new' situation facing man demands a new orientation toward it because the familiar attitude of doing one's utmost and hoping for the best, becomes irrelevant in a situation where all factors can be controlled and no element of uncertainty left to chance; we seem to have no option but to go forward in discovering greater powers for creating the artificial, which is automation, the central core of technology.

Let us now consider the nature of automation. Speaking on the subject, John Diebold said :

If automation means anything at all it means something more than a mere extension of mechanization.....It implies a basic change in our attitude toward the manner of performing work.....through the systematic application of the principle called feed back, machines can be built which control their own operations, so that productive processes do not have to be

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1. Max Black, "Some Tasks for the Humanities, *Technology as Institutionally Related to Human Values*, ed. Philip C. Rotterkush (Washington, D. C. : Acropolis Books, Ltd. 1974), pp. 84-85.

designed to take into account the human limitations of a human worker.¹

From these reports it is for the lay person to understand that the new element of automation is far from being a neutral force for the use of man, and that in its essence it is different from the humanities. Automation is not an extension to human powers but a medium of replacement of the human element. A great step was taken when electricity was introduced which brought about instantaneous changes in communications, overcoming the obstacles of mass, time and space. In the West the phenomenon of automation is being called the Cybernetic Revolution which, will eventually exercise greater power than the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century. J. Rose explains :

While mechanical power of the First Industrial Revolution formed an extension of man's muscles.....hence its description as the Age of Mechanisation..... the computer is an extension of his mind and is the 'brain' of the *automatic* system, hence the Cybernetic Revolution is also known as the Age of Automation.²

To understand the nature of Cybernetics is to comprehend the grounds for apprehension of an end of the age of man. Machines had added to the power of man in bringing about changes in his environment. Cybernetics is capable of changing man himself and putting him in the same

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1. Statement of John Diebold before the Joint Economic Committee, Sub-Committee, on Automation and Energy Resources, 86th Congress and Session, reported in *The New Technology & Human Values*, ed. John G. Burke (California : Wadsworth Publishing Co. Inc., 1966), pp. 109-110.
 2. J. Rose, *The Cybernetic Revolution* (London : Elek Science, 1974), p. 16.

electrical circuit as his surroundings.¹ Technology is not a power which is handled by man but the very medium in which he lives.² By medium is meant that by which and in which we have our existence. Nature is now in the process of being completely made over into a man-made environment, which in turn can be seen as an extension of the central nervous system of human beings. It is an ironic fact that scientifically man has truly identified himself with his world and achieved a startling unity with it.

The technological era is therefore qualitatively different from the previous mechanical age. The discovery that mass can be changed into energy was a lesser radicalization of our understanding of the world than the present total transformation of mass and energy into the region of electronics where all barriers of time, space and mass disappear. This situation could only be a-moral as all standards of living and behaviour must remain fluid; it is also ambivalent, since all technological projects create their own problems which need solutions. In this way a society could come into being which would be governed by technology and not by a value-system or an ideology. It is this situation which is interesting. No physical annihilation of man is envisaged here. The point is, that man may give up his choice for freedom in favour of scientific determinism. The inner dynamics of this mode of determinism creates a particular level of existence which can be called a state of computerised automation. Just as the human nervous

1. Norbert Wiener writes : "This is an idea with which I have toyed before.....that it is conceptually possible for a human being to be sent over a telegraph line." *God & Golem, Inc.* (Cambridge : The M.I.T. Press, Inc. 1964), p. 36.
2. Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society* (New York : Knopf, 1964), p. 6. Also Marshal McLuhan's definitive work, *Understanding Media* (New York : McGraw-Hill, 1964).

system has sensory-motor nerves at one end and the brain at the other, so also automation is the feed back extremity of a continuum beginning with a computer.¹ By hooking this on to other computers, a near-infinity of possibilities is obtained. It becomes a self-sustaining process, almost like nature, but with no precise end in view. Set in this frame of reference, according to Ellul, the question, 'can man control his own techniques?' is meaningless, because a computer technique forestalls such an option. Here, that which was supposed to be instrumental is seen to be the master. It is an irreversible process but not an inevitable choice. Ellul refers to the ancient Greeks who did in fact refuse, for a time, to start on the road to the conquest of nature and a choice which was condemned by Gilbert Murray as a 'failure of nerve'.

We have come now to the heart of the reason behind the pessimistic tone of the writing coming out of the West. Norbert Wiener, the father of Cybernetics, has called it, in effect, the magic wand which is capable of granting any wish but does not tell us what to wish for or whether the granting of the wish will be agreeable to the receiver. Humanity now is in the position of the sailor with the 'monkey's paw',² because it is now within the bounds of

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1. Donald N. Michael, *Cybernation : The Silent Conquest* (California : Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1962) pp. 5-6.
 2. An old soldier returned from India to visit a friend. He had with him a talisman that he said had the ability to grant three wishes to each of three people. The first owner of the talisman had taken the first set of three wishes, two unknown to the soldier, but the third one for death. That is how the soldier had become the owner. The soldier took the second set of wishes for himself, but declined to talk about them. His experiences were too terrible. One set of wishes remained. With considerable reluctance the soldier

conceptual possibility that a machine may be set to 'generate' another machine or 'learn' to play an 'intelligent' game of chess.¹ What we may understand from this is that the power of technical programming is virtually limitless and the mystique of the barrier between life and matter is in the process of being exploded.² This technological future which seems inescapable to the West, is proving to be the ultimate catalyst precipitating all meaning from life and the ideals of hope and justice which were integral to it so far. Michael Harrington writes :

.....(the) conscious revolutionists of the past proposed visions which outstripped reality, the unconscious revolutionists of the present create realities which outstrip their vision. In the first case, it is history that is sad, in the second man.³

yields to his friend's request for the talisman. The friend's first wish is for £ 200. Soon after an official of the company where his son was employed came to tell him that his son had been crushed to death. As a solatium, but without any admission of responsibility, the company granted the father £ 200. His next wish was that the boy come back, and so his mutilated ghost came knocking at the door and so his last wish was that the ghost go away. W.W. Jacob's well known story retold by Norbert Wiener, "The Monkey's Paw", *The New Technology and Human Values*. ed. John G. Burke (California : Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1966) p. 132.

1. Norbert Wiener, *God & Golem*, Inc. (Cambridge : The M.I.T. Press, 1964), pp. 21 & 36.
2. Dennis Gabor, *Inaugural Lecture* (Imperial College of Science and Techonlogy, University of London, March 3, 1959), p. 47.
3. Michael Harrington, *The Accidental Century* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1969), p. 16.

If we may restate the arguments we may say that the failure of history, not only alienated man from his past, but has suddenly catapulted him into the future totally neutralizing the quest for justice.¹ The future which by definition should be unknown to the present, has lost this quality for modern man. Technology now brings the entire range of possibilities, in principle, within the range of actuality. The process of the overcoming of chance is well on its way to completion. It is true that there are as yet many unknown spheres of investigations which could engage the attention of scientists for years to come. The point about technology is that it is able to make its own solutions to questions; it brings into being that which was not in nature before and thereby transforms totally the ways of human adjustments in life. The new creation plays a definitive role by making it possible and therefore inevitable for other related techniques to come into existence which in their turn add to the proliferating process. Thus, it is said that, in principle, the future is already here, because technology is a process of mechanical development, a growth which follows its own self-regulative compulsions. To look to the future in any form that is theological, philosophical or even humanistic would mean an acknowledgement of the possibility of reciprocity

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1. Marshall McLuhan describes the difference between the previous mechanical age and our electric age as being that of exercising greater emphasis on process and transformation, rather than on the material that changes. Electricity is a single field of experience which is capable of co-ordinating every kind of diversity and multiplicity. This process takes place by remote control. The fact of speeded up change effects time barriers also. The past can be conserved and the present encapsulated. This requires new ways of thinking of the past, the present and the future. *The Futurists*, ed. with an Introduction by Alvin Toffler (New York : Random House, 1972), pp. 62-63.

between the natural process and human activity.¹ At present the future is at hand as programmed into machines and the past is dissociated because it has no formative role to play in this act. In modern terminology, therefore, the word 'progress' loses its meaning. Instead of 'progress', it is now suggested that we understand changes in terms of the Principle of Acceleration which is non-dialectical and non-evaluative. In substantiation of his point, the author of the idea cites the example of an African student studying the most advanced courses in Western Universities. The gap between the African bush and the modern city can be closed speedily with adequate facilities and proper methodology.²

The paradox of affluence and despair is precisely this fact, that given the future, man does not know how to relate himself to it. Just as the African student who, uprooted from the bush is not accepted by the West which taught him to differentiate himself from his background, Western man, experiences the same alienation from his past and faces the same silence of indifference from the world which he has created and chosen for himself. He cannot see at present what exactly can save him from the swiftly growing phenomenon of technology becoming the last court of appeal in every sphere of life. There are no moral imponderables now to contemplate; one is only to keep abreast of the newest level of technical expertise in all matters requiring decisions. Freedom of action on cherished principles become irrelevant in a controlled situation where statistics, techniques and expertise override individual preferences. The history of civilizations has been, so far,

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1. John Baillie makes this distinction between development and progress. *The Belief in Progress* (The Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 122-132.
 2. Folke Dovering, "The Principle of Acceleration: A non dialectical theory of progress," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (England: The Cambridge University Press, 1969), Vol. II, p. 95.

a history of the fight for freedom. To give up this freedom voluntarily in the name of establishing a just society, could only lead to a novel kind of self-annihilation. Moreover, this mode of self-annihilation is already prefigured in the manufacture of 'Cyborgs', creatures who combine in them qualities of the human being and the machine.

That this prospect of self-annihilation is very much within the bounds of possibility (in principle) has entered the consciousness of Western thinkers. Arthur C. Clarke writes ironically that the machine-animals¹ which are being created today may even be an improvement on the race of man because they would be devoid of such crudities and hostilities as men are heir to. Consequently they would lead a more civilized and peaceful life. Then he writes almost an epitaph for man :

No individual exists forever, why should we expect our species to be immortal. Man, said Nietzsche, is a rope stretched between the animal and the Superman...a rope across the abyss...That will be a noble purpose to have served.²

Reason has been the guiding star of the Western genius for very long. It has been its pride and its prerogative. In following the dictates of reason, it has discarded other ideals as of lesser importance, but this has resulted in a paradoxical situation :

.....the experience of the twentieth century showed that an alliance could exist between science and irrationality. This indeed was

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1. The inventors of the machine-animal called 'a Cyborg' are Drs. Manfred Clyne and Nathan Cline of the Rockford State Hospital, New York.
 2. Arthur C. Clarke, *Profiles of the Future ; An Inquiry into the Limits of the Possible* (New York : Harper & Row, 1973), p. 229.

something new. The general assumption had been that a scientist was a rational man.....¹

The "terrifying alliance"² between science and irrationality in the name of supreme felicity for mankind, grew out of a coupling together of knowability and mechanization, propounded so forcefully by Bacon, at the beginning of the modern era. Paolo Rossi writes :

What radically and primarily distinguishes every "modern" ideal of knowledge is precisely the renunciation of the concept of knowledge as contemplation.....knowledge, according to Bacon, is not the product of the intuitions of solitaires, but the fruit of a thorough and radical reform respecting man's mode of thinking and speaking and which concerns the very structures of his societal co-existence.³

With "the renunciation of the concept of knowledge as contemplation", modern man understands that we do not live in a mechanical age because of technology; we live in a technological society because we are being thrust towards greater mechanization and automation everyday. Critics as well as technologists are agreed today that in effect :

.....automation (i.e., self correcting machines that feed back information and adjust themselves) and cybernation (i. e., making the automated machine capable of responding to a near infinity of contingencies, by hooking

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1. *The Environment of Change*, ed. A. W. Warner (New York : Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 9.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
 3. Paolo Rossi, *Philosophy, Technology and the Arts in the Early Modern Era* (New York : Harper & Row, 1970), p. 181.

them up to computers) posses the scientific capacity to accomplish the ancient myth of Daedalus.

The quotation refers to Homer's story of Daedalus, a statue which of its own motion entered the conclave of gods on Olympus; the story is rejected outright by Aristotle who writes dismissingly : as if "the shuttle would weave and the plectrum touch the lyre without a hand to guide them...."¹

It seems Homer was right and Aristotle was wrong.

1. *Politica*, 1253 b. 35. tr. by Benjamin Jowett.

Chapter Three

The Indian Response to the Western Tradition

A. Science and Philosophical Thinking :

It was stated in the previous Chapter that modernity is closely related to the phenomenon of automation, toward which technology is headed inescapably, and it also seems, irrevocably. It should be made clear that all modern writers on this problem are not necessarily pessimistic; neither are they devoid of a sense of wonderment for the vast universe opening out in front of their fascinated gaze. It is also undeniable that expanding knowledge could be considered by some, to be its own reward. What then, is at stake here, which is so vital as to engage the attention of some of the best minds of the West ?

The main point at issue now, as it has always been, is the freedom of man. All traditions, in their own fashion, have nurtured ideals of personal freedom, social justice and reverence for God. The shadow of nothingness hangs over all these ideals because 'thinking' itself is being replaced or forestalled by statistics and computerised plannings in every aspect of human life. The right to make decisions, good, bad or indifferent, is an inalienable prerogative. Without this freedom there can be no morality, no quest for justice on earth or hope for the supreme fulfilment of human life in self-realization. No political system or economic pressure has so much power to take away freedom from man, as the scientific plannings being used by modernised disciplines. Technical know-how is a-moral. A society, guided by the latest techniques is necessarily secular. In the modern age,

faith in God endures inspite of science and not because science subscribes to it.

We have now come to the main issue between philosophers and scientists. The philosophical implication of separating the regions of 'knowing' and 'making' are profound. For the scientist 'to know' is 'to create'. In this connection a point must be raised against the arguments that the inventions of science are akin to the creations of artists.¹ It can be seen easily that technological inventions add new dimensions to our world, thus transforming all existing structures of meaning by which life is sustained in society. This element of total radicalization does not belong with the creative arts of music and painting. These creations do not change what they seek to understand. A piece of brilliant music, or a masterpiece may be copied a hundred times without effecting the pristine purity of the original work. Repetition, here, is only celebration of the uniqueness of the first vision. The mystery of the dialogue between the artist and nature is preserved in this way, for succeeding generations. With scientific inventions, we can proceed only by way of discarding the obsolete. The former conquers time the latter is defeated by time. The future is ever possible with the arts and humanities, whereas for the sciences it is already nothing because any thematisation of problems, here, opens the way to discovery of the solution. The future in principle, belongs to the present, given in the form of plannings and programmings. To say that all plans are tentative, subject to the pressures of as yet unknown factors, is not to deny the knowability in principle, of all that may happen.

For the philosopher, therefore, to know is not to make but to be in readiness to receive. Philosophical thinking may operate only between a seeking for knowledge and an experience of receiving from, the Other, which may be called 'a waiting upon'. Freedom may survive only in this twilight zone of 'a waiting upon'. For the philosopher, questions

1. See above p. 35

are more important than their answers, because, in formulating a question, he precludes himself from providing the answer and yet the asking of the question is crucial since it is the only form of preparedness which may bring about a vision of Truth. Philosophical Truth cannot be created but only received, seen, realized or experienced as immediate apprehension.

The question is, in a technological society how should the mystery of this twilight zone be preserved so that, philosophical thinking may sustain the relevancy of self-enquiry? Philosophers, in the West are fully aware of their predicament. Hans Jonas writes :

'In any case, the idea of making over Man is no longer fantastic, nor interdicted by an inviolable taboo. If and when that technological revolution occurs, reflection on what is humanly desirable and what should determine the choice—on "the image of man," in short—becomes an imperative more urgent than any ever inflicted on the understanding of mortal man. Philosophy, it must be confessed, is sadly unprepared for this, its first cosmic task.'¹

The inadequacy of philosophy belongs with the will toward the changing atmosphere of automation. Philosophical thinking can be merely irrelevant, where cognition is deployed totally into channels of expeditious manouverability. This is to say that philosophical thinking cannot be effective in an era when mechanisation operates as the sole legitimate mode of knowability.

So far, in India, we are not called upon to evaluate the potential of contemporary scientific knowledge. The terms 'modern' and 'contemporary' are not inter-

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1. Hans Jonas, 'The Scientific and Technological Society,' *Philosophy Today*, Issue on *Toward a Philosophy of Technology*, Vol. XV, No. 2/4, Summer 1971, p. 98.

changeable. Western civilization is modern, but the East as yet, is only in the process of becoming Westernised. We must now examine our own understanding of the demands of contemporary times.

B. 'Modernisation' of Indian Thought :

In India any thematization of concerns regarding our past, present or future is necessarily done in Western terms at present. This era of developing economy makes us look at ourselves as belonging to the third world. The technological milieu is not an outcome of our own tradition; it is a foreign element in our midst. Any degree of appropriation or interiorization will make us Westernized and not modern. According to some Indian thinkers, this is an advantage we have over the West.¹ India is in a position to take the technical know-how and make use of it in its own way, without falling a prey to the evils which have stalked its advance in the West. We can learn from their mistakes and not commit them.² To take this attitude is to subscribe to the view that technology is a neutral factor and means nothing more than a viable option for the poorer countries. Its main sphere of influence is the area of practical projects and its encroachment on other aspects of human life can be contained if such is desired.

1. *Vedanta and Modern Science* : Correspondence between Sir Julian Huxley and Swami Ranganathananda on "The Message of the Upanishads" (Bombay : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1971).
2. M. S. Iyengar, "Can we Transform into a Post-Industrial Society ?" *The Futurists*, ed. with an Introduction by Alvin Toffler (New York : Random House, 1972), pp. 190-192.

(Mr. Iyengar at that time was Director, Regional Research Lab. Jorhat, India, Incharge of Developing Micro-Technology for Village-Scale Industrialization.)

It is a means towards an end and need not dictate what values are to be cherished as far as our moral and religious behaviour is concerned. That, in India 'modernisation' is another name for Westernization is made clear by such statements as these :

Modernization consists of a composite set of processes each entwined with a variety of contextual meanings in which elements of history, cultural structures, and existential factors each assume boundary-maintaining functions The autonomy of moral values over the instrumental values (Modernity) can, therefore, be logically postulated at all stages of modernization in all societies.¹

From this definition of 'modernization' it can be assumed that we in India are not yet open to the real significance of technology. At a seminar on *The Concept of Progress*, the consensus of opinion veered round to the point that with proper checks on the forces of secularization, technology could be made useful for Indian conditions. It was left for a Westerner living in India to see with clear eyes the ambiguity latent in the idea which tries to hold together the concepts of 'progress' and the non-secular dimension of reverence. Arthur Osborne said that in Nineteenth-century Europe, man became homocentric rather than theocentric, and this was the age of progress for him. He added :

The same process is now taking place in the East and the same results will follow It will be strange indeed if the time comes when the mechanized materialistic East begins to talk about the mystic West :²

1. Yogendra Sing, "Historicity of Modernization," *Tradition and Modernization*, ed. S. K. Srivastava (Allahabad, India : Indian International Publications, 1976), pp. 54, 67.
2. Arthur Osborne, "The Concept of Progress," *Indian*

The question that is being raised is, whether the technological inadequacy of India is only a matter of time-lag, or is there something of fundamental difference here; whether the technological gap between the East and the West will lessen as time goes on, and if so will the present thrust toward scientific advancement in the East meet with the same fate as it has done in the West. The writings coming out of contemporary India show no apprehension regarding the overpowering role of technology. The underlying thought seems to be that the tradition which has withstood many other conquests is eminently suited to the task of appropriating modernity and thereby transcending it. We shall examine this understanding on the part of Indian thinkers who seek thus to interpret the bases of the tradition in Western terminology. In such writings no indications of an inner conflict between modernity and the religious consciousness of India are to be detected. First, an attempt is made here to bring the quality of this unawareness into focus, so that it may be seen in the light of Upanishadic thought which has its own dimension of involvement in the world. To be Westernized is not to be 'modern'. A modern man is a man made aware of his predicament in a society which provides him with no clue for the understanding of his own state of existence in the world. This itself is precisely the category of thought which relates him to his environment.

The term 'modernity' then, is being used in this book to mean the self-awareness of philosophical thought since the days that mechanization became a category of cognition. The question which should impinge itself upon the consciousness of people belonging to other traditions, at this point in time, is whether they fully understand the mode of this grasp on the world, and whether it is consonant with their own tradition, which, so far, has not known "the

Philosophical Annual, Vol. III (University of Madras 1967), p. 13.

renunciation of the concept of knowledge as contemplation." Knowledge in India has been nothing but the "product of the intuitions of solitaries" who have thought not only of man's "societal co-existence" but also of the very essence of his being.¹ In order to bring out the nature of the difference between the two modes of thinking, a brief account of the Indian tradition is given below.

The separation between the changing world-order and that which remains hidden and unchanging, is very crucial to Indian thought. Everything which changes is a presentation of that which does not change. The whole range of Indian thought, it may be said, is an accounting for the unchanging which underlies the given changing order of existence. This idea of 'separation' pervades the ethos of India. A demand for discrimination between that which is of the nature of transience and its opposite is implied in this separation; and inevitably, one is urged to strive toward a progressive disengagement from involvements which are pleasing but ultimately unsatisfying in order that attention may focus on the veil of truth.

The unavoidable usage of negative terms in this context, unfortunately creates a wrong impression, but the reference here is to ontology and it is a legitimate way of calling attention to that essential discontinuity which precisely is the mode of relating to the ground of all existence. In the Upanishads, renunciation and the Bliss of fulfilment are held together in an unique unity.²

It is usual to say that the main thrust of Upanishadic thought is toward establishing the unity of Brahman as the

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1. See above p. 45.
 2. *Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam yatkinca jagatyām jagat tena tyaktena bhunjithā māgīdhah kasyasviddhanam.* (Know that) all this, whatever moves in this moving world, is enveloped by God. Therefore find enjoyment by renunciation. Do not covet what belongs to others. (*Īśa.* 1)

one ontological ground of all that there is. It would be appropriate to say that together with this an equally major effort can be detected toward engaging man's attention to the enquiry into the reality of this unitive ground.

The sacred texts are considered indispensable to the enquiry; they awaken the questioning spirit. The enquiry into the ground of our being does not follow naturally from man's given status in the world. We in general, remain in thrall to what is given in experience. Without the texts, there would be no indication of knowledge of any other thing than our experience in the world. The texts, therefore, are the sole indicators toward an enquiry into a region which is said to be of supreme significance for man.

The tradition does not primarily speak of the reality of the world and all that it means for a successful adjustment therein, because, this involvement is inescapable. The world is our only known sphere of activity, and there is here no need to underscore the obvious. It is man's nature to take delight in the world and to feel all the emotions which keep him involved with his fellow men. The environment of nature is an extension of his field of concerns. In the tradition, the forest is as important as the city, but life in the city is a preparation for life in the forest.

Indian thought has seen no separation of religious mythology, and questionings into the factual nature of things. It has been preoccupied with keeping the possibility open for a more crucial discrimination. It is, therefore, not an accident that science did not arise in India. Science needs that focussing on the material world which was of limited use only for traditional thought. In India thinking was kept mobilized toward understanding the human condition within the parameters of rationality and mortality. It is to be remembered here that time belongs with the world and therefore the viability of the quest for truth may always remain a living issue for man. That is to say, that the tradition is not a perpetuation of meaningless reiterations of aging principles. The tradition seeks to preserve the purity of

the indicators toward a life which while being lived in this world may become capable of that blessedness which is the receiving of truth.

At this point in time of our world-history we do not have much choice in the matter of industrialization, but this is not to say that India can be technicised with no loss to her tradition; the very nature of technology precludes such an eventuality. If culture is the means by which is preserved a people's grasp of the essence of the meaning of life then to try and hold together technology and Indian thought is to do less than justice to either the tradition or to technology.

The impact of the Western tradition was felt by India through the medium of education in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The well wishers of India, native-born, as well as foreigners worked toward bringing about an age of enlightenment to dispel "the darkness of ages". Those who wished not to bring about changes in their tradition, did not know how to deal with the overwhelming forces of radicalizations of the time; they took refuge in an aggressive form of fundamentalism, which was not effective in stemming the tide.

In the field of academic philosophy, the encounter between Western thought and Eastern heritage, has not yielded any fruitful results. The attempts at reinterpreting Upanishadic teachings, in the light of Western philosophy have not inaugurated any living schools of thought which may guide the intellectual questioning of contemporary India.

Before we undertake an analysis of this situation, we need to put the encounter of two different traditions in perspective. The next Chapter seeks to bring out the formative factors of contemporary philosophical thought in India.

Chapter Four

English Neo-Hegelianism and Indian Scholarship

A. The Meeting of Horizons :

Early in the nineteenth century, the philosophical thought of India found a world audience through the series of Essays on Hindu Philosophy published in the proceedings of the Royal Asiatic Society of England and Ireland, by H. T. Colebrooke during the years 1824-32.¹ Other Indologists did pioneer work in translating and editing Sanskrit texts into European languages.² It has been said that the nineteenth century saw the "flowering of Oriental Scholarship"³ and it did indeed prove to be a

1. Hegel in his Lectures on Indian Philosophy referred to these essays as his main source of information. *Hegel's Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, tr. E.S. Haldane, (London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1892), vol. I, pp. 125-147.
2. For example : Text of the *R̥g Veda* became available to scholars with the publication of the *Sacred Books of the East* series by Max Mueller from Oxford (1849-1875).

The *Bibliotheca Indica* series was started by the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1847. The Society had been established on January 1, 1784, under the Presidentship of William Jones (1746-1794), generally regarded as the founder of European Indology.

3. J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*. The Hartford Lamson Lectures of 1913, (published by Munshiram Manoharal, New Delhi, 1967), p. 2.

period of widening horizons, not only for the West, but the East as well. Many Colleges imparting Western education to Indian students were established in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. The three Universities at these places came into existence in 1857 with the avowed policy of promoting secular learning only, as a change from the previous frankly evangelical method of teaching.¹

These Colleges and Universities became for Indian students the gateway to the wider world of Western civilization. The teachers who came from Scotland and England were greatly admired for their learning, simplicity and piety. Generations of young academicians cherished grateful memories of their pupilage with these kindly men who sought to inspire their students with their own ideals of education.² Many students at this time were able to go to

1. Macaulay, the chief architect of the educational policy in India, wrote to his father, 'It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes in Bengal thirty years hence; and this will be effected without efforts to proselytise, without the smallest interference with religious liberty merely by the material operation of knowledge and reflection. Quoted by K.M. Panikkar, *Hinduism and the West*, (Chandigarh, Panjab University Publication Bureau. 1964), p. 24.
2. '.....The greatest academic influence on me,' writes Haridas Bhattacharya, 'came from the saintly Professor Henry Stephen who taught three generations of young men in Bengal successively in the Duff College, the Scottish Churches College and the Calcutta University.' *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, eds., S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead, (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., (1936), 3rd impression 1958), p. 68.

Many other contributors to the volume, express similar sentiments : A.K. Wadia mentions Fr. Devine of the St. Xavier's High School and J.R. Cuthbert at Wilson

England and thus came in direct contact with eminent scholars at Oxford and Cambridge, such as, John McTaggart (1866-1925), C. C. J. Webb, (b. 1865), A. S. Pringle-Pattison, (1856-1931), F. H. Bradley (1846-1924), H. H. Joachim (b. 1868), and James Ward (1843-1925).¹

The British Universities in the last years of the previous century, came under the influence of Idealism imported from Germany. The flowering of German philosophy on the insular soil of England was more of an enigma than its subsequent invasion of Indian Universities. It cannot be said that it was more congenial to the English mind than the utilitarianism it supplanted; neither had there been any opportunities for pursuing the studies of Kant and Hegel directly, previous to this period. In fact, one historian of philosophy writes that it was surprising how 'without adequate training in Kant, England acquired such a firm grasp of the new problems', because, 'it is not a matter of a few isolated thinkers, but a whole host' and further, this movement was not imitative but 'stamped unmistakably with the seal of the English intellect'.²

College; V. Subrahmanya Iyer, who was taught at the Madras Christian College, writes, - 'I commenced my studies under Dr. Charles Cooper who kindled in me a passionate love for metaphysics.' *Ibid.*, p. 593.

1. G. C. Chatterji (p. 129), S. N. Dasgupta (p. 252), A.R. Wadia (p. 624), etc. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, *op. cit.* Nearly all of them at one time or another came under the influence of neo-Hegelianism. Hiralal Halder writes (p. 216), "The philosophical movement known as Neo-Hegelianism was in my student days gathering strength in Great Britain and I was one of the very few, not improbably the only one, who then felt its power in India."
2. A. Ruggiero, *Modern Philosophy*, (London, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1920); p. 261. Rudolf Metz high-

Anglo-Hegelianism was frankly eschatological in nature. Max Mueller, then a new-comer to Oxford, (1846) expressed his great astonishment at the theological atmosphere prevailing in England at a time when Germany and France were adopting an historical approach to textual exegeses.¹

lights four contributing factors which may have brought about this renaissance of Idealism in England :

- (a) The prevalence of romantic literature pioneered by Coleridge and Carlyle. Carlyle's writings were greatly influenced by German idealism.
- (b) A few isolated works by individual philosophers (such as Hamilton and Ferrier) created the right atmosphere for bringing about a change.
- (c) Theological interests were sustained by Hegel's divinization of history at a time when evolutionists were to be contended with at home.
- (d) Benjamin Jowett's (1817-93) careful husbanding of classical literature and his translations of Plato brought the idealistic tradition in the Greek heritage within the grasp of all English-speaking centres of learning.

Rudolf Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, (London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.), p. 249. ff.

1. He writes, "I had been at a German University and the historical study of Christianity was to me as familiar as the study of Roman history. Professors whom I had looked up to as great authorities, implicitly to be trusted, such as Lotze and Weiss at Leipsic, Schelling and Michelet at Berlin,.....left me with the firm conviction that the Old and New Testament were historical books, and to be treated according to the critical principles as any other ancient book, particularly the Sacred Books of the East of which so little was then known...a belief that these books had

The British Universities at this time were engaged in holding together the demands of the new sciences, and the philosophical thoughts arising out of them, with their own heritage of an institutionalized religion. British philosophers felt themselves hedged in, on the one hand, by Darwinists who emphasized the animality in man and, on the other, by Hume, who exclaims, "I am affrighted and confounded with that forlorn solitude in which I am placed by my philosophy, and fancy myself some strange uncouth monster, who not being able to mingle and unite in society has been expelled all human converse and left utterly abandoned and disconsolate..... ." This uncompromising sceptical spirit of David Hume still brooded over the philosophical world of the Universities. Kant, to a certain extent had dispelled this intellectual despair, but his expulsion of reverence from the cognitive structure was not fully acceptable to English philosophers.

The coming of Hegel opened up a new dimension in the understanding of the fast changing world of the nineteenth century. Hegel was presented in a language which brought theology and naturalism together and Anglo-Hegelianism continued to be a movement toward such a synthesis. We may gauge the power of this synthesis from the following two statements, which were written not at the same time, but almost half a century apart :

Hegel's views conciliate themselves admirably with the revelation of the New Testament.¹
and—

I have never disguised it from myself that when

been verbally communicated by the deity or that what seemed miraculous in them was to be accepted as historically real, simply because it was recorded in these sacred books, was to me a standpoint long left behind." *My Autobiography*, (Delhi, Hind Pocket Books (P) Ltd., 1976), pp. 164-165.

1. J.H. Stirling, *The Secret of Hegel*, (1865) p. 100.

I speak of the 'Absolute' I mean by the word precisely that simple absolutely transcendent, source of all things which the great Christian scholastics call God.¹

The first quotation is from J.H. Stirling, who pioneered the study of Hegel in England and the second is from A.E. Taylor's popular work on *Metaphysics*. Hegel convinced a generation of scholars that the Absolute synthesized within it Thought and Being, Logos and Metaphysics, and therefore that 'an unthinkable reality' is a contradiction in terms. The identification of causal evolution with the deductive processes of logic led to the inexorable development of pulling together science, philosophy and religion. It was perhaps inevitable that his triadic eschatology in which were reconciled thought and reality, history and evolution determinism and the freedom of the world-spirit reaching full self-awareness in the Absolute Idea, should carry within it the seeds of its dissolution. The exclusive choices of Marx and Kierkegaard, writes Karl Loewith, "separates precisely what Hegel had unified."² For Marx the choice to revolution was necessary for the making of history and for Kierkegaard the choice to existential despair which alone could lead to authentic living. Yet another note of dissension came from a new generation of philologists who attempted to divest history of its epic aspect, making it much less mysterious and much more similar to the present."³ They believed that philology also had a crucial role to play in the understanding of the world process.

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1. A.E. Taylor, *Elements of Metaphysics*, (7th ed., Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1924), p. xiii.
 2. Karl Loewith, *From Hegel to Nietzsche*, tr., David E. Green, (New York, Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1967), p. 135.
 3. Emile Brehier, *Contemporary Philosophy, The History of Philosophy*, vol. VII, tr. Wade Bashin. (The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 5.

England, due perhaps to its theological bias, remained relatively untouched by these reactions which were overtaking Hegelianism on the Continent. English scholars concerned themselves with the 'concrete 'other' of thought rather than its assimilation within thought. T. H. Green (1836-82) attempted to recover the Kantian notion of a synthetic unity of apperception from that of an ideal totality as postulated by Hegel, in which it had become one with its 'other' and hence was no longer transcendent. Green accepted the Hegelian position that the highest knowledge was mediated knowledge but did not in effect give up the Kantian thesis of an ultimate unity of apperception which as constitutive of nature and as eternal consciousness is both impersonal and universal. Green was appreciated in India as a critic of the dualism inherent in Kant. According to Green, man is primarily a knower; he is a self-conscious being—perhaps much more else but that at least, and that genuinely—conscious of himself always over against a not-self, which is co-existent and co-real and always simultaneous with self-consciousness.

F. H. Bradley's ontological distinction between appearance and reality was studied eagerly in India and appreciated as an improvement upon Green's idealistic position. In Bradley's absolutism anti-intellectualism had reached its zenith. Hegel's position seemed to have been totally reversed. The unthinkable is a contradiction according to Hegel. Bradley states that reality is unapproachable by thought or rather, that thought is transmuted in entering the whole of reality. Every particular is an integral part of the whole. Knowledge, according to Bradley, is an immediate experience of the coherent whole. Fragmentation of this concrete universal in individual experience is the inescapable outcome of discursive reason. This uneasy partnership of coherence and immediacy was a philosophical problem of considerable interest and held the attention of Indian scholars for a long time. Bradley was hailed as a philosopher who could envisage the possibility of superceding a cogni-

tive approach to the problem of reality.

It is an acknowledged fact that the movement of thought from Kant to Hegel was of primary importance for England and that Kant was viewed through Hegelian spectacles.¹ Oxford and Cambridge imparted to Hegelianism a religious aura and made it peculiarly their own. The wholeness of the Universal was centrally quartered by the horizontal line of terrestrial existence and the vertical line of divine intervention, so that,

Within the circle of the Absolute, it is "the dove descending"...that by its vertical descent into and intersection with, the linear order of times establishes the cross as at that centre of all absoluteness.²

All this was of great interest to Indian scholars. The rise and fall of Anglo-Hegelianism in all its phases continued to influence the philosophical thinking of India.

It is true that much of Kant and Hegel remained alien to Indians. The secularity inherent in the Hegelian system remained hidden in its British version and therefore, was not understood by its Indian inheritors who gave it a metaphysical colouring which could not and did not endure for long in India. The situation prevailing in Indian Universities was radically different from that of the British Universities. Indian Universities were innocent of any theological need to come to terms with theories of evolutions. For this reason, although Western philosophy came to India in the garb of neo-Hegelianism, it was assimilated in a manner which was peculiarly Indian. It can be said that the major difference between Anglo-Hegelianism and Indian

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1. R. Metz, *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 253.
 2. Anne C. Bolgan, "The Philosophy of Bradley and the Mind and Art of Eliot", *English Literature and British Philosophy* (Chicago : The University of Chicago Press, 1971).

Hegelianism lay in the importance given to Kant rather than to Hegel in the movement of thought from Kant to Hegel.

Modern scholars tend to deprecate the flowering of neo-Hegelianism on Indian soil especially as Hegel had nothing but abuse and contempt for Indian philosophy, and because historically it remains a fact that Indian scholarship did not influence or add to the pool of English works on Kant and Hegel.

In order to understand the foundations of contemporary neo-Vedantism, it is necessary to enter into the philosophic mood of India at the beginning of the century. At this point in time it should be possible to gain a perspective on the situation obtaining at the Universities then and formulate an explanation for this strange phenomenon.

The outstanding students who were selected for higher studies at that time came from cultured families where they had received an adequate grounding in their own tradition. Many of them had the good fortune to study with Pandits who were active in their own sphere of Sanskrit learning.¹ Due to this background in traditional philosophy, which in effect was their religion as well, they found nothing exciting in Christian theology, which was the first concern of missionary

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1. The following scholars can be considered as exercising a formative influence on future teachers at Indian Universities : Mahamahopadhyaya Vamacharan Bhattacharya, MM. Ananta Krishna Shastri (Varanasi), MM. Kalivara Vedantavagisha (Calcutta, who edited and published the *Brahma Sutra* with Bhamati in 1887), MM. Lakshman Shastri Dravid, (who initiated a generation of dedicated scholars notably Jogendra N. Bagchi), MM Panchanan Tarkaratna (Varanasi), MM. Chandrakanta Tarkalankar (Calcutta, who delivered the Ist Sree Gopal Basu—Mullick Lectures), also Jagadguru Sri Shankaracharya of Sringeri. (From the biographical notes given in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy, op. cit*).

schools imparting the basics of Western education to Indian students.¹

Their interest, however, was quickened by Kant and Hegel. Christianity held no special appeal for the scholarly Indian who shied away from even a hint of an exclusive claim to truth which for him was contrary to the spirit of philosophy; whereas they felt that they could easily enter into the metaphysical and epistemological concerns of like-minded philosophers. Epistemology had always played a crucial role in the formulation of Indian philosophical thought. The opponent's view was important in the development of one's own thesis. A high standard was maintained in the tradition regarding the fair apprehension and presentation of the critic's point of view.² They could, in the same strain, welcome a confrontation with a philosophical position which at once challenged the presuppositions of their tradition and yet, as it seemed to them, fell far short of the many insights which enriched it.

For Indian Philosophy, if one may generalize, the crux of the matter has always been to know the transcendent from

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1. Even so it is true that Western influence had triggered off what has been called 'the Indian Reformation Movement' and 'the Age of Renaissance.' (D. S. Sarma : *Hinduism Through the Ages*, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1956, p. 64).

The Reformists sought to jettison the Pauranic tradition as an exegesis of the Vedic Texts, while the fundamentalists adhered to it strictly. A few scholars continued to maintain the tradition of interpretative exegeses which was all the more remarkable because they were now doing it in an alien language which did not readily lend itself to the translation of Sanskrit terms.

2. See the Preface to *Sarva Darśana Saṁgraha : Different Systems of Hindu Philosophy*, E. B. Cowell and A. E. Gough (Delhi, Cosmo Publications, 1976).

within the dimension of the world; to grasp the unrelational through that which is relational; to thematise that which reveals itself as transcendent as well as immanent; in other words, to make possible the intelligibility of Pure Being, 'beyond all duality and difference'.

Hegel, therefore, was perceived as a challenge, but Kant's transcendental deduction of categories seemed at once close and yet removed from the heart of the problem. The limit set upon the categories by Kant was acceptable but not the unknowability of noumenon because the problem of the knowability of the unmediated knower—the 'noumenon' according to the Vedanta had long been debated in the Indian tradition. Thus they welcomed the Kantian epistemology as the meeting ground for a common enterprise. Pre-Kantian and post-Hegelian theology never acquired relevance in the Indian context; but Kant and Hegel were greeted as metaphysicians, the former as a kindred spirit and the latter as a challenge and both were treated as such. It was felt that an exchange of thoughts on this level was possible. K. C. Bhattacharyya's crucial article "The Concept of Philosophy" brings this out very clearly. He writes :

With regard to the knowability of the self as a metaphysical entity Kant holds that the self is a necessity of thought and is the object of moral faith, but is not in-itself knowable. My position is, on the one hand, that the self is unthinkable and on the other that while actually it is not known....we have to admit the possibility of knowing it without thinking....¹

Other eminent scholars continued to write, pulling together such terms as seemed commensurable to them:

Vedantism sets its face against all forms of ontological argument, the Rationalist's device of deriving existence from a specific concept—

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1. K. C. Bhattacharyya: "The Concept of Philosophy" (in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, op. cit.), pp. 105-125.

Perfect Being (Descartes & others), or from a system of concepts—Reason (Hegel). Existence is not *concievable* ; we can only intuit it. If Hegel's is a logic of ideas or concepts, the Vedanta's is a logic of existence.¹

From these references it can be seen how Kant and Hegel were situated in the scheme of philosophical speculation in India. Other thinkers continued to compare and contrast both systems of thought, while developing their own thinking with regard to their own tradition.

B. The Beginning of Comparative Studies.

The first outcome of this intellectual encounter took the form of a series of comparative studies.² Swami Abhedananda, one of the first Indians to interpret Vedanta Philosophy for the West, writes that he was impressed by the Lectures on Hindu Philosophy delivered by Pundit Sasadhar Tarkacudamani in 1883 at the Albert Hall, in

1. T.R.V. Murti, "The Two Definitions of Brahman in the Advaita", (K. C. *Bhattacharyya Memorial Volume*, Amalner, Indian Institute of Philosophy, 1958), pp. 135-150.
2. Hiralal Haldar. *Neo-Hegelianism*, Heath Cranston, 1927. D. M. Datta. *The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy* (European, American and Indian), Calcutta, Art Press, n.d.

R.V. Das. *The Philosophy of Whitehead*, James Clarke & Co., 1937.

U.C. Bhattacharya. "Space, Time and Brahma", *Jha Commemorative Volume*, Poona Oriental Book Agency, 1937.

Haridas Bhattacharya inaugurated at the Calcutta University, the prestigious Stephanos Nirmalendu Ghosh Lectures in Comparative Religion in 1933-34. (Published by the Calcutta University in 1938 entitled (*Foundation of Living Faiths*).

which he dealt with the ancient Greek Philosophers as well as modern theories of evolution.¹ Studies in comparative philosophy continued to be the main concern of academicians for the greater part of the present century. Probably the first public acknowledgement of the demands of the time was the inauguration of the Sree Gopal Basu-Mallick Lectures on Vedanta Philosophy by Calcutta University in 1898. The aim was to state the relevance of Vedanta Philosophy in the fast changing world of the nineteenth century. The first speaker was the highly respected M. M. Chandrakanta Tarkalankar who devoted himself to this undertaking for five years between 1898 and 1905. Other speakers who addressed themselves to the task were variously required to indicate the place of Vedanta in the economy of Modern Western thought and to "estimate its value"² or to speak on "the place occupied by the Vedanta in the philosophical systems of the civilized world and of its merits as compared with Western Schools of Thought".³

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1. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, op. cit., pp. 49-50.
 2. Pramātha Nath Mukhopadhyaya. *Introduction to Vedanta Philosophy*. (Lecture of 1927, published by the Book Co. Ltd., Calcutta, 1928).
 3. S. K. Belvalkar. *Vedanta Philosophy* (Lecture of 1925, published by Bilvakunja Publishing House, Poona, 1929).

Other speakers in the Series are :

N. K. Datta. *The Vedanta : Its Place as a System of Metaphysics* (Lecture of 1926, Calcutta University, 1931).

R. D. Ranade. *Vedanta, the Culmination of Indian Thought* (Lecture of 1928).

S. K. Das. *A Study of the Vedanta*, (Lecture of 1929, Calcutta University, 1937).

Kokileshwar Bhattacharya *Sree Gopal Basu-Mullick Lectures on the Vedanta* (Lectures of 1930-31).

At about this time¹ some Journals were founded with the same ideals in mind. The Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner (1916) became a centre for study and research in Vedanta Philosophy and a place where many eminent scholars developed their own philosophies.

From the writings of this period, it can be seen clearly that Indian philosophers saw themselves undertaking a double task: along with the appropriation of the best thoughts of the West they were engaged in the task of re-stating the paramountcy of the Upanishadic heritage for the contemporary philosophical scene in India. They learnt to look at their own tradition objectively and thematise it in the language of Western metaphysics. Parallels were drawn and similarities emphasized with a view to establishing a common platform for philosophical debate. Pre-war writing abounds in such passages as these:

.....We might note the great resemblance between the ancient metaphysical system of India and the present metaphysical systems of the West. The Absolute of Bradley has numerous points of contact with the Advaitism of Samkaracharya. Both suppose that the Absolute is the only ultimate real. With both,

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1. *The Indian Philosophical Review* was first published from Baroda in July, 1917 under the joint editorship of A. G. Widgery and R. D. Ranade. This journal was discontinued after about four years. It was resuscitated again as the *Journal of the Academy of Philosophy and Religion*, an Institution founded by Ranade in 1924, under the name of *Review of Philosophy and Religion*.

Vedanta Kesari was first published in 1913 from Madras. *The Journal of the Indian Institute of Philosophy*, Amalner was inaugurated in January, 1918.

The Philosophic Quarterly was first published from Calcutta in April, 1925.

Kalyan Kalpataru in 1934 from Gorakhpur.

God is different from the Absolute.....¹

Or

According to the Vedanta, Brahma is not only the first but also the highest reality. According to Alexander, the first and ultimate reality is Space-Time, out of which eventually the quality of deity will emerge. For the Vedanta, Brahma is the beginning and the end of the world—its Alpha and its Omega. But according to Alexander, Brahma, if that one could stand for the highest reality, would only be the unattained end of the world—its Omega, but not its beginning which was only Space-Time.²

It remains a historical fact that the comparative method advocated by Indian philosophers found no echo in the Western world which at best remained indifferent to the entire issue.³ No sustained academic interest in contemporary Indian thought was evinced by the thinkers of other countries.⁴ Looking back at the first encounter between these two

1. R. D. Ranade, quoted by the author from an earlier paper, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* op cit., p. 545. Ranade goes on to compare Ramanuja and James Ward, and McTaggart's non-theistic idealism with the *Sāṃkhya nirīśvaravāda*.
2. U. C. Bhattacharya, "Space, Time and Brahma", *Jha Commemorative Volume*, (Poona, Oriental Book Agency, 1937), p 83.
3. The more recent phenomenon of 'East-centricism, of the West operates at a level of, and in answer to, a quest for trans-Western universalism. This has been taken up for discussion in a later Chapter.
4. There were rare exceptions like B. Faddegon's *The Vaisesika System*, (Amsterdam: 1918) wherein he maintained that there was no fundamental difference between Eastern and Western systems of thought from the point of view of comparative study.

disparate tradition we find them talking, to a great extent, at cross-purposes. Although individual scholars on both sides expressed their admiration of each other, even so there was no confluence of philosophic thought, which could contribute to a greater understanding of either system.

Chapter Five

Neo-Vedanta as the Philosophy of Contemporary India

A. The Lack of Mutuality between Indian Thought and Western Philosophy.

In trying to understand the abysmal lack of communication between Eastern thought and Western philosophy, a few factors reveal themselves as possible contributing conditions. The phenomenon must be approached from both sides if we are to appreciate the attitudes of twentieth century philosophers in India, toward their own tradition.

The severest encounter, was with regard to eschatology. One could say that the central theme of the Western tradition, after the advent of Christianity, is time. Time is the arena of God's providential action which we must reconcile with the conception of time as history made by man. The present is such now because of how the beginning was, and the future will be as the present is modified to become, which means that, that which was not before, can be made to happen in the future. A high sense of responsibility for processes occurring in time characterises every mode of philosophical thought in the West from the most severely pragmatic and utilitarian to the seemingly opposite idealistic extreme. For Western thinkers the language of the will had expressed some of the loftiest thoughts about the great future of humanity—and 'humanity' was the watchword of the nineteenth century. Throughout Europe, the freedom of man from bondage to institutionalised religion or to oppressive political control, was the main theme engaging the attention of philosophers. Since religion was

NEO-VEDANTA AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA 73

inextricably bound with the history of Europe, they could not readily appreciate a separation of the two in another tradition. From their point of view philosophical statements emptied of all historical content were limited in cognitive value. Their objection was that *logos* seemed to be still embedded in *mythos* in India.¹

European scholars were thus repelled as well as fascinated by the heterogeneous conglomeration (as it looked to them) of ideas which was made available to them by Indian Pundits as well as by conscientious Indologists. Situated in their own tradition, the Western scholars who were trying, at that time to unravel the tangled skeins of Indian thought, could not appreciate the philosophic significance of the concept of time studiously kept in abeyance with regard to metaphysical questions. A religion which had no eschatology could only be primitively animistic or anthropomorphic, or at best pantheistic, and pantheism in the West was not a viable philosophical position.²

This basic misunderstanding gave rise to many criticisms of Indian thought. The severest criticism from the West centred around the trivialization of the world as a sphere of human endeavour for the betterment of the future of mankind. The ever recurring theme of world-negation, in the texts created the indelible impression in the Western mind that Indian thought was pessimistic in the extreme.

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1. "No where in ancient Near Eastern thought do we find the emancipation of the *logos* from the *mythos* which characterises the development in Greece."

Joachim Wach. *Types of Religious Experience*, (The University of Chicago Press, 1951, 5th Impression, 1972). p. 70.

2. Marvin Farber. *Basic Issues of Philosophy* (New York : Harper Torch Books, 1968), p, 179 ff. (For a standard criticism of the pantheism of Vedanta, see Kirtikar, *Studies in Vedanta* (Bombay : 1924) Ch. ii).

Describing dissolution of karma and final deliverance, Barth writes :

The practical consequences of such a doctrine as this can be only a morality of renunciation, and to underrate, if not to scorn, every established culture. There is consequently very little mention of positive duties in the Upanishads. The essential matter is to stifle desire, and the ideal of the devout life is that led by the Sannyasin...¹

Some Western scholars, very soon found reasons for this attitude of "complete quiescences" to be an inferior type of heredity, and the hot climate which indisposed "the organisation for active exertion" and predisposed it toward contemplative life.²

The tragedy of nineteenth century Indology lay in the fact that sympathetic European scholars were embarrassed by the very same concept which the Indian tradition put forward as its highest achievement in the philosophical understanding of the texts. In monism, was seen the failure of thought to rise to the concept of one God as creator and redeemer of mankind. The Theistic West which gives high regard to ethical considerations could admire only "a clear summit"³ rising uncompromisingly above many cloudy

1. A. Barth, *The Religions of India*, tr. Rev. J. Wood (Varanasi), (The Chowkhambha Sanskrit Series, Vol. XXX, 1963, first published, 1921), p. 79.
2. A. E. Gough *The Philosophy of the Upanishads and Ancient Indian Metaphysics* (London : 1882), p. 6.
3. "Hinduism as religion will remain theistic, with the tendency persisting to view all theories and forms as aspects of one eternal truth and substance, even though Hindu religion has never yet disclosed within itself a cloudless summit to which its many paths may lead ..." The author concludes optimistically that Hinduism may still achieve this in the future ! John C. Archer (Yale),

NEO-VEDANTA AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA 75

pinnacles. It felt that where everything is possible nothing can be predicated, and this position can only lead to the worst kind of relativising of good and evil. A few grieved over what they considered to be an arrestment in the development of Vedic religion. They surmised that had the mythology of Varuna been pursued to its logical end, Hinduism could have purged itself of its idolatry :

...From these comparisons we see, how near Varuna came to being a Rigvedic Yahweh, "full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy" (Exodus XXXIV—6). The great catastrophe of the Babylonian Exile (586 B. C.) alone cured Israel of polytheism and idolatry...¹

The theistic West could not be expected to be patient with a tradition which countenanced on open-ended dialogue, lasting centuries, between the theism advocated by certain schools of thought and the Absolutism of Advaita. From the perspective of the tradition itself, however, such a debate was necessary in order to understand the central theme of the Upanishads. The best opinion, therefore, of Indian thought in the West at that time, was that the Sanskrit tradition had at times reached sublime heights of spirituality, as had other classical or pagan cultures, but that it had essentially remained untouched by the dimension of charity and thus unaware that "the Grace of God is still available to our undeserving."²

"Hinduism" *The Great Religions of the Modern World*, ed., E. J. Jurji (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 89.

1. The authors regret that the promising start made in the Vedas came to nothing as Varuna subsequently dwindled into oblivion. *The Religious Quest of India*, eds. J. N. Farquhar and H. D. Griswold (Oxford University Press, 1923) pp. 350-355.
2. Charles Morgan, "The word Serenity", *The Writer and*

On the Indian side, because of their own traditional background, scholars were led to read such trends of thought into neo-Hegelianism or rather neo-Kantianism, which could not be sustained for long. The secularism inherent in German idealism was congenial neither to British theologians nor to Indian thinkers; yet the former attempted a compromise and the latter sought to build upon it as a means of communication in the realm of philosophical inquiry. The region of the sacred had proved to be divisive and recalcitrant material for philosophers to work on. Metaphysical speculations, on the other hand, were opening up undreamt of horizons so that every thinker could share in the same perspective and speak in a communicable language, or so they thought.

The term 'metaphysics' is used here in the sense in which Kant was understood to have used it, that is to say, the region of the *a priori* which lies beyond the pale of any part of the constitutionality of human understanding.¹ *The Critique of Pure Reason* was understood in India to be a refutation of scepticism and not of metaphysics. The Noumenon was the antithesis of the phenomenal series and could not be brought into the series. It remains the Unknown which spurs the intellect to greater efforts. Kant had said that the ideas of reason were regulative and therefore, the quest for the Unknown (but not the Unknowable) was not closed. The efforts toward circumventing Kant's agnosticism (which British idealism had re-affirmed) seemed a legitimate occupation for philosophers. Kant had confined contradiction to the antinomies of reason. This was congenial to Indian thought. Hegel, on the other hand, needed to be denied because he broke open the antinomies and posited the contradiction within the heart of reality itself.

his World (London : Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1961), p. 44.

1. Immanuel Kant. *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. by Norman Kemp Smith. Preface to Second Edition B XXX, ff.

What the Indian thinkers failed to see, in which they were by no means alone, was the overcoming of metaphysics which lay concealed in the core of German idealism. Once Kant had transferred ontology to the region of the will from the realm of knowability, the beginning of the end of metaphysics was stated. The well-known restrictions which Kant explained, conditioned reason, in order that a faith beyond reason may prevail, only created a gap which was filled by the will of man complying to the 'categorical imperative' of an ethical life, making faith superfluous. The results of the tremendous supremacy given to human will can be assessed by a review of the Kantian studies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the West. The West in a way, lived out the full explication of all that lay implicit in Kant's critical philosophy and considered him to be the father of modern liberalism. As Kantian studies began to draw their own logical conclusions, Indian scholars came to a parting of the ways because the destruction of metaphysics, had neither been foreseen nor could be appropriated by them. Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and also Existentialism and Phenomenology which followed in the wake of Kant and Hegel, were faithfully included in courses of studies, but cannot be said to have acquired relevance in the Indian context.

B. Neo-Vedanta as a Dimension of Apologetics.

A parting of the ways came about in more ways than one. The utter lack of understanding evinced in the West of the best thoughts of India, awakened the awareness of a closer connection between tradition and philosophy than had been so far allowed by Indian scholars. At this stage this awareness should have given rise to a new dimension in the understanding of their own texts not in the context of Western metaphysics but in the context of the Westernization which was taking place. One cannot say that this happened in India. Instead what took place was in a sense a second phase in the development of comparative studies brought about by the realization that Indian

philosophy was being misinterpreted by its Western exponents. S. Radharishnan pioneered the attitude of polemical defense which had the merit of bringing Eastern thought to the notice of Western Universities in an unprecedented manner.¹ His vigorous self-analysis also commended itself to the younger generation of Indian scholars who without leaving the anchorage of the tradition wished to move with the times. Writing in the *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, sponsored by Radhakrishnan as the Vice-President of India, P. T. Raju and K. A. Hakim maintained that :

India now is not merely reviving but reflecting upon and re-interpreting its past, its religion, its philosophy, its social and ethical forms; some of which it is discarding, some it is explaining away, and the rest it is reshaping. It is thus showing its great potentialities for progress, which is ultimately due to the plastic nature of its spiritual culture capable of change and adaptation. This is what Macnicol calls the 'omnivorous capacity' of Hinduism, which has eluded the grasp of most of its Western critics, who try to identify it with some of its external and accidental forms, without understanding its essential spirituality which has assumed divergent external forms to suit changing circumstances. Many writers, both historians and philosophers wonder how Indian culture could have survived impacts, attacks, conflicts and convulsions of more than four thousand years. The reason lies in

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1. C. E. M. Joad. *Counter Attack from the East, A Philosophy of Radhakrishnan* (London : George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1938). In this book the author described the immense popularity of Radhakrishnan's lectures in England and how the halls where he delivered them were crowded to overflowing.

the adaptable nature of its essentially plastic spiritual basis.¹

The quotation given at length above is fairly representative of what has come to stay as the philosophic mood of the era. A will to cut away the deadwood of the tree of tradition and allow it to flourish again in the changed milieu of contemporary India is evident from the writings which profess a hard core of spiritual grounding together with an ongoing concern for the needs of the time.²

From the vantage point of the decades of the sixties and seventies, one can clearly see that although India did not consciously tread the path of the West's experience of anguish and alienation foretold by Nietzsche, she did, by contrast, begin to take note of her own spiritual heritage and sought to incorporate it in her understanding of these increasingly secular times. Metaphysics came closer to religion. Many books promoting "The Contemporary Thought of India", included such figures as Swami Vivekananda, Shri Ramakrishna, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Rabindra Natha Tagore, etc., who had not previously affected the academic life of the Universities.³ This could also be a response to the

1. *History of Philosophy, Eastern & Western*, eds. S. Radhakrishnan, et. al., (1952), 1967, pp. 526-545, p. 526.
2. The Proceedings of the All-Indian Philosophical Congresses reflect this will toward a re-orientation. Almost every speech and every paper situates itself in the framework of Western thought, the rare exception being K. C. Bhattacharyya's Presidential Address to the Ninth Congress, "Concept of the Absolute and its Alternative Forms", 1933-34, pp. 1-27.
3. P. Nagaraja Rao, *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (Bombay : Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1970). (The author writes about Raja Rammohun Roy, Shri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, B. G. Tilak; R.

need for a new spiritual dimension in the West. We come across the phenomenon of a more broad-based enunciation of what philosophy is in India synchronising with a loss of faith in its own tradition and religious philosophy in the West.

India's conscious emulation of the British tradition, on the other hand, remained unbroken in the Universities. Without a Moore and a Russell to lend meaning to the overthrow of idealism, Indian Universities loyally followed the trends set by them and engaged in the problems of linguistic analysis and logical positivism. In England, a logical sequence can be seen in the progression of thought from neo-Hegelianism, through Bradley to Moore and Russell, Wittgenstein and Ayer; but with Indian scholars it was more a matter of taste and opportunity to study these philosophers rather than a logical development of thought, thus isolating them in a coterie which necessarily subsisted on itself without affecting the mainstream of philosophical enterprise either at home or abroad. This is so, not because of any serious lack in the quality of Indian scholarship but because linguistic problems are also rooted in the language which is the voice of tradition and thus are not easily appropriated by philosophers used to a different language-structure.¹

Tagore, J. Nehru, S. Radhakrishnan, Vinoba Bhave and The Gita.)

Benoy Gopal Ray's *Contemporary Indian Philosophers* (Allahabad, Kitabistan, 1947), mentions Raja Ram-mohun Roy, D. Tagore, K. C. Sen, Sri Ramakrishnan, Swami Vivekananda, Swami Dayananda, R. Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo.

S. Radhakrishnan's *Great Indians* (New Delhi : Kalyani Paperbacks, 1973) includes Maharishi Raman, Sri Paramhansa, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore.

1. See *Current Trends in Indian Philosophy*, ed., K.

NEO-VEDANTA AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA 81

So it would not be grossly mistaken to say that, in general the twentieth century in India is a period marked by a singular lack of authentic philosophic enterprise. Various thinkers admit this with regret, as for example, the group of eminent scholars, writing on the occasion of the beginning of a new Journal, acknowledged that "our contributions to Philosophy in recent times, barring a very few exceptions, have not at all been very significant".¹

Satchidananda Murty and K. Ramakrishna Rao. (Waltair : Andhra University Press, 1971). (The editors offer this book as the sequel to the *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* published in 1936 by S. Radhakrishnan and J. H. Muirhead.) The articles in this volume are on Structuralism, Phenomenology Scientific Humanism, Axionotics and other current topics in philosophy. The single article on Advaita Vedanta is by N. V. Banerji, who writes :

"In a way it (the Advaita Vedanta) dismisses the world of nature; and as already indicated, it admits the expansion of the ghost in the machine to the extent of infinity in the name of reaching absolute Truth (Brahman). In consequence science is lost to its antithesis nescience and man with all his problems disappears into a state where he is a stranger to name and form (*nāma-rūpa*) and indeed non-human. p. 35. ("Foundation of Advaita Vedanta", pp. 23-36).

1. Editorial, *Jijñāṣā : The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy* (Calcutta: July 1961), vol. I, no. 1, p. 1 ed. by N. V. Banerji, Kalidas Bhattacharya, J. N. Chubb, R. Das, T. M. P. Mahadevan, T. R. V. Murti and N. A. Nikam. (The Academy was in existence for about seven years. It was started in order to fulfill the need of contributing to the contemporary world of philosophical thinking. There is a preponderance of articles on Nyaya, Logic, The meaning of Meaning. (vol. II, 1963) and critical expositions of the philosophies

The philosophical scene of modern India despite such avowals continues to be in disarray to say the least. The rich tradition of hermeneutical exegeses of Sanskrit philosophical texts remains with Sanskrit scholars without finding a significant place in the intellectual life of the people still being trained by a secularised system of education which is kept studiously secular for political reasons. No appropriate methodology has been evolved in this country for understanding the ancient heritage. The historical or philological methods in use are applied with no clear methodological circumspection yielding the same type of results as were obtained by European Indologists a century ago. The tragic overtone of this misadventure in self-understanding lies in the fact that, in effect, Indian scholars are to this day trying to answer the charges laid against their tradition by Indologists of the nineteenth century. All these charges are summarised in Radhakrishnan's masterly phrase :

It (Hinduism) is intellectually incoherent and ethically unsound.¹

The charge of intellectual incoherence arose largely out of unfamiliarity with the methodology of the treatises in Sanskrit and the meeting of it was a matter of making available to the English speaking world the details of the philosophical literature in its breadth and depth. Such a necessity for highlighting the epistemological core of Vedantic thought was

of the West, e. g., de Chardin, Spinoza, Rousseau, Husserl and Wittgenstein. (vol. IV & V, 1966, 1967). The fact of its discontinuity is self-explanatory.

1. "The Spirit of Man", *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 475. Recent publications from Indian Universities on subjects of philosophy and religion generally reflect this trend and a scrutiny of doctoral dissertations specifically from the Departments of Sanskrit and Philosophy in recent decades will support the critique made here.

felt keenly and many scholars, notably A. C. Mukerji of the Allahabad University, made it their life's work to state it in a language not lacking in cognitive value for the understanding of those not belonging to the tradition. A. C. Mukerji and other like minded men, coming across the writings of the Western philosophers, saw no reason to fear that their rendering of their own thoughts would be considered less than adequate in Western Universities. It was his conviction that the epistemological base of Advaita philosophy would make it comprehensible to philosophers belonging to different traditions of other languages.

The second charge, viz., ethical unsoundness, was based upon a basic problem. Any philosophy extolling a separation of 'appearance' and 'reality' must necessarily lead to a trivializing of the world and thus a lessening of the sense of involvement in it. The West could not but hold in abhorrence an ideal of renunciation in which they saw a syndrome of apathy, moral ineptitude and defeatism. Indian scholars with one voice contested this interpretation by illustrating that the world was not negated in Vedanta philosophy but only denied ontological priority. Kokilleshvar Bhattacharya, of the Calcutta University, was one of the first neo-Vedantins who made a systematic attempt to give a realistic interpretation to Advaita philosophy to contain such criticisms against the Vedanta Philosophy. This reversal of the classical theory of *māyā* made a great impact on other scholars, notably S. Radhakrishnan.

Thus we see that Neo-Vedanta came into existence almost as an apology for and a defense of classical Vedanta. Nowhere is to be found a voice asking for a disengagement of issues at this stage. All eminent scholars of the time set themselves to the task of interpreting Vedanta in Western terminology. A. C. Mukerji writes,

By Neo-Vedantism we mean here to characterize an important tendency in Indian thought which has arisen for the attempt to re-interpret Sankara's absolute monism in the light of

modern idealistic or absolutist thought. It consists essentially in so interpreting Sankara's thought as to make it less obnoxious to the charge that Sankara's absolutism is vitiated by the fallacy of bare identity.¹

Thus we see that the necessity of defending Vedanta against the attacks of Indologists who were interpreting it to the West brought into existence the school of thought known as Neo-Vedanta. The two major charges which implied other minor ones, were that Indian philosophy was akin to mysticism and that it was devoid of an ethical foundation. The best minds of the time became preoccupied with the task of setting aside these criticisms. It is apparent that they felt the need for a reevaluation of Vedanta in the light of the demands of reason and morality as stated by the West.

Chapters Six and Seven are devoted to detailed analyses of Neo-Vedantic presentations by A. C. Mukerji and Kokileshvar Bhattacharya. The former was reputed to have given a cogent rationalistic basis to Vedanta and the latter a very plausible realistic one. These Scholars, although not as well known as for example, Radhakrishnan, are nevertheless important as pioneering a new school of philosophy for contemporary India. A study of their writings is very rewarding because we may see now in perspective very clearly, that the freedom (*mokṣa*)-oriented philosophy of Advaita was eclipsed under a vein of apologetics which added nothing to the traditional mode of understanding this school of thought. In trying to present Vedanta to the West in a form which would be acceptable to it, the best type of the scholarly mind in India was tempted into following a path which tragically led nowhere, because the classical description of Brahman as Sat (Reality), Cit

1. A. C. Mukerji, *Self, thought and Reality* (Allahabad : The Juvenile Press, 1933) p. 388.

NEO-VEDANTA AS THE PHILOSOPHY OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA 85

(Consciousness) and *Ānanda* (Bliss) was fragmented here. There were other such exegeses on Consciousness and Reality but no attempt to bring in Bliss as rounding off the soteriology of Vedanta. This step in self-forgetfulness was never retraced by Indian scholars.

Chapter Six

Intuition as a Category of Thought in Vedanta : A. C. Mukerji¹

A. C. Mukerji's sensitivity to what was taking place in the academic field in India, is very apparent in his writings. Like many other men of his time and position, he was vulnerable to the numerous unthinking evaluations of Indian thought and yet he did not allow this to affect his openness.

1. The following abbreviations are used in this Chapter for citing from the writings of A. C. Mukerji :

BI "British Idealism", *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*, Vol. II, ed. S. Radhakrishnan et al. (London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1953) pp. 299-316.

CM "The Crux of Monism", *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 1965, pp. 1-14.

HP "Human Personality," Presidential Address : The Twenty-Sixth Indian Philosophical Congress Poona, 1951.

Idealistic Trends, "Idealistic Trends of Contemporary India," *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 1960, pp. 111-12.

N of S *The Nature of Self*, (Allahabad : The Indian Press, 1938), 1943.

Some Aspects, "Some Aspects of the Absolutism of Shankaracharya (a comparison between Shankara and Hegel)" *The University of Allahabad Studies*, Vol. IV, 1928, pp. 375-429.

to the philosophical insights of men of other countries.¹ He had a very deep appreciation of his own tradition which he sought to express in the contemporary language of academic philosophy. His main interest centred round the problem of the Self. He wrote :

In India specially where life and philosophy were never separated from each other, the attainment of the ultimate Purpose of Existence was made conditional on a right solution of this supreme problem, while all other philosophical discussions owed their value to the light they could throw on the nature of self and the method of self-knowledge.²

A. C. Mukerji believed further that a critical appraisal of Vedanta philosophy was required for the modern age rather than a continuation of the tradition of exegeses.³

S'S Theory, "Shankara's Theory of Consciousness,"
The University of Allahabad Studies, Vol. XIII,
1937, pp. 43-59.

STR *Self, Thought and Reality* (Allahabad : The Juvenile Press, 1933, 1957).

The U & P N "The Unconditioned and Pure Nothing,"
The University of Allahabad Studies, Vol. XXVII,
1951, pp. 1-21.

1. "I am fully aware of the General attitude of scorn and contempt, of distrust and discouragement, that has brought discredit upon the contemporary Indian thinkers from within and outside India....." HP p. 1.
2. N of S, p. 5.
3. Indian philosophy has only succeeded in rousing antiquarian interest, and, even when admired, the admiration is almost like what is excited by the mummies in a museum. Yet, like most of the Indian systems, Samkara's analysis of experience if approached

He was impatient of the "so called lovers of" the ancient indigenous wisdom of the forest sages "who deplored modern rendering of this wisdom" and thought that "(they) should be made aware of the similar insights of others outside their country."¹

It was his conviction that inspiration could be drawn from all such thinkers of the past, who had grappled with the problem of the Self. A modern reconstruction of the problem, as far as he was concerned, could not fail to take into account the contributions of past thinkers, Eastern, as well as Western. "I am not one of those" he wrote, "who believes that Indian Philosophy contains wisdom which is unsurpassed and unsurpassable."²

On account of this independent approach to Advaita philosophy, it becomes rather difficult to define A. C. Mukerji's philosophical standpoint because, firstly, although he did not object to the term 'idealist',³ his critique of idealistic trends, Eastern as well as Western, remained very sustained over a period of more than forty years. Secondly, his most distinguishing contribution to the philosophy of contemporary India can be said to be his vindication of intuition as indispensable to knowledge. It is therefore, perhaps better to say that he followed a rather

in the critical rather than the exegetic spirit, would throw a flood of light on some of the perennial issues of epistemology and metaphysics....." N of S. p. viii (Preface to the 2nd edition, 1943).

1. The U & PN, p. 8.
2. CM, p. 1.
3. "Now idealism, as we understand it and shall try to defend here, is the belief or doctrine according to which thought is the medium of the self-expression of Reality; or, to put it from the other side, Reality is such as must necessarily express itself through the ideal or ideals that are organic to the knower's intellectual equipment which may be called thought or reason." STR, p. 35.

solitary course, going neither with the traditionalists, nor with those neo-Vedantins, who sought to give the kind of new image to Advaita philosophy which would be more in keeping with the realistic trends of the time.¹

A. C. Mukerji's distinctly polemical style of writing is without doubt the outcome of the demands of his age. He was caught up between two different types of contemporary interpretation of the Vedanta, and neither was acceptable to him. He could not agree with those, who following the lead of Paul Deussen understood Vedanta in the light of neo-Kantianism²; and he was totally out of sympathy with such Indian scholars who attempted, what, to him, amounted to reconciliations with unjustified criticisms.³

1. STR, p. 371.

2. "The advaita Absolute, it is generally believed, is something unknowable and inconceivable, and falls entirely beyond the ambit of ordinary experience; and so far it is supposed to be analogous to the 'thing-in itself' of Kant. This agnostic interpretation of Samkara was started by no less an authority than Paul Deussen who did so much for the spread and appreciation of the advaita speculations, and whose work on the Upanishads and the advaita Vedanta are justly regarded as pioneer works in the field of Indian philosophy.....Dr. S. N. Dasgupta unhesitatingly accepts Deussen's interpretation and remarks that 'If we look at Greek philosophy in Parmenides and Plato, or at modern philosophy in Kant, we find the same tendency towards glorifying one unspeakable entity as the Reality or the Essence. N of S. pp. 370-371. Quote from S. N. Dasgupta, *History of Indian Philosophy* Vol. I, p. 42.

3. A.C. Mukerji refers to Radhakrishnan's early views regarding *māyā* in Advaita. *Some Aspects* pp. 420-423. Also to Kokilashvar Bhattacharya's realistic interpretation of Vedanta. STR, p. 371.

A. The Aim and Method of A. C. Mukerji's Philosophy :

The thing that he desired most was the development of a common platform where philosophical problems could be discussed with understanding and mutual benefit. At one stage of his philosophical development, he wrote with some optimism :

The days have certainly gone when a country could profitably limit itself within its geographical frontiers even in the matter of philosophical speculations. We have all to realize that the intellectual atmosphere has now cut across the physical boundaries and welded the nations into one concrete whole in which every culture has made and is still capable of making valuable contributions.¹

This optimism, however, gradually gave way in the face of the total indifference to Indian thought he met with in his professional career. He came to feel almost a despair regarding philosophical understanding amongst reasonable men of disparate cultures. He has given expression to this awareness of isolation as far as Indian philosophy is concerned in one of his later papers. "The Crux of Monism".²

He had also come to realize that he was pleading the cause of philosophical thought in a world which was fast becoming responsive only to anti-intellectualisms. He kept in touch with European thought and kept his mind open to the new trends of Existentialism and Phenomenology.³

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1. Idealistic Trends, p. 11.
 2. "The Crux of Monism," *Philosophical Quarterly* Vol. 38, No. 2, 1965, pp. 1-14.
 3. "Universality, Genuine Versus Suppositious", *The Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No. 4, 1965. And "The Empirical Legacy of British Idealism," *The Journal of the Indian Academy of Philosophy*, Vol. V, 1966.

This is reflected in his later writings which show an increasing awareness of the impossibility of the task he had set himself, namely, the establishment of a common pool of philosophical knowledge for the East and the West. It must be understood very clearly, however, that he had not at any time advocated the comparative method in Philosophy. He was always very conscious of the dangers of facile comparisons between Eastern thought and Western philosophy. He wrote as early as in 1928 :

If we want to profit by thinking modern problems of European philosophy in Indian terms, without misrepresentation of either and yet with a considerable clarification of both methods of thought, we must give up the practice of finding Kant and Hegel, for instance, in the Upanishads; these are misrepresentations which do not clarify but confound problems.....The problems of epistemology and the methods of proof which came to prominence with Kant and Hegel, was evolved under the pressure of circumstances radically different from any that could exist in India.¹

This opinion remained unchanged throughout his career and he continued to express his doubts regarding attempts at comparative studies.² It may seem surprising that A.C. Mukerji should have deprecated the comparative method, when he himself constantly drew parallels from the writings of Kant, Bradley, T. H. Green, and others, to illustrate various points of his own rendering of monistic thought. This seeming inconsistency, one may observe, is not quite un-amenable to an explanation. He thought he detected in the history of Western philosophy, which had reached its highwater mark, according to him,

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1. Some Aspects, p. 379.
 2. Idealistic Trends, pp. 113-114 (See his criticisms of P.N. Srivastava and P.T. Raju).

in the philosophy of Kant, the same quest for a knowledge of the Self (albeit not consciously) which was the activating principle for Indian philosophy.¹ What he attempted to do was to look at the history of Western metaphysics from the perspective peculiar to Vedanta philosophy, which, obviously was not how Western philosophy understood itself. It was his conviction that many thinkers of the West in pursuing the demand of coherent thought had come close to the awareness of the non-relational Self; but this position according to him, had never come to be stabilized as it were, due to an initial distrust of the "Unknown" which was supposed to be identical with "Unknowable", and Hegel's insistence that all meaning was mediated. It was his modest ambition to make explicit this implication obtaining in Western thought. In T. H. Green's "unconditioned conscious principle" he saw a shadow of the concept of Self as described in Indian texts.² Similarly, according to him Caird by admitting that the correlativity of the object and subject is a correlativity for the subject, pointed to the over-reaching Self beyond this duality.³ He interpreted the thoughts of Haldane also in this manner.⁴ It must not be supposed however that A. C. Mukerji was arguing for parallelism or a convergence of the two trends of thought. He was careful to point out the divergences inherent in either system. He wrote :

Problems of philosophy, it is important to realize, are intimately connected with the spirit of the age and the intellectual tradition of a nation.⁵

He also would not have subscribed to the claims of a Perennial Philosophy which according to him would have belonged more naturally to the region of mysticism. So he

1. N of S, p. 328

2. *Ibid.*, p. 323.

3. N of S, p. 323.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 326.

5. Some Aspects, p. 376.

used the comparative method (with the above proviso in mind) because he did believe in "the essential identity of dialectical processes in different worlds of thought."¹ He did not doubt the unitary character of our contemporary world and on the Indian side pleaded for the recognition of the epistemology of Vedanta as epistemology in its own right. He took great pains to establish that it was neither a brand of agnosticism nor mysticism² but that it was perfectly in accord with the demands of coherent thinking which would repay the study of contemplative minds. He did not doubt that a knowledge of Vedanta philosophy could enrich the intellectual life of the West, just as Western metaphysics had stimulated the thinking of the East. He was aiming at reciprocity and mutual understanding, which he felt was justified under the circumstances. He wrote.

The object of comparative study in philosophy, we believe, is to discover the dialectic movements of universal thought; but this will remain a far-off dream or a mere pious wish till the different interpretations are dragged out of their subjective seclusion in the enjoyment of an oracular prestige* into the region of objective criticism,.....what is wanted is a spirit of co-operation.....³

His task, as understood by himself, therefore, was two-fold : firstly to creatively interpret the history of Western metaphysics as developing toward an uncovering of the Self as the ultimate knower and secondly, to interpret the methodology of the Vedanta in accordance with the demands of rational thought alone. He envisaged his enterprise as the laying bare of what lay implicit in Western as well as Eastern thought. The self as ultimate knower lay concealed in Western philosophical thought; similarly the crucial role

1. *Ibid.*, p. 376.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

3. *Some Aspects*, p. 375.

* [A reference, no doubt, to Hegel.]

of reason in Indian speculations was overlaid by constant references to the sacred texts. The thematising of both possibilities, A. C. Mukerji felt could not but create a commensurable language adequate for an exchange of philosophical thought. When his task is thus understood the parallelisms with which his writings abound and which are disconcerting in their range and profusion¹ begin to acquire some meaning and significance. His aim was to acquaint the Western reader with concepts in Eastern thought. He was in effect trying to follow a methodology which proceeded from the familiar to the less familiar. He did not wish to minimize the historical context of any of the thinkers, but only to highlight the insights of great philosophic minds so that a greater light may be thrown on the problem of Self-knowledge. If the aim of philosophy is to establish the ultimate, with the help of relational knowledge then all efforts toward it, he felt could not but be mutually profitable.

In the following pages, I shall attempt an account of his basic position regarding the laying of a secure epistemological foundation for a theory of the Self.² Firstly, I shall summarize his evaluation of the Kantian position and then state his understanding of the Advaita philosophy.

B. A.C. Mukerji's Understanding of the Critical Philosophy :

A. C. Mukerji attached the greatest importance to the history of Western philosophy, especially the movement of thought from Hume to Kant. This epitomised for him a definitive answer to every kind of inductive procedure which sought to objectify the Self in order to explain the

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1. As, for example : William James and the *Madhyamika* philosophers. N of S., pp. 121 ff,
Ramanuja and Pringle-Pattison. *Ibid.*, p. 148.
Samkara, Kant, Green and Suresvara on Memory. *Ibid*,
p. 209, etc.
 2. STR, p. 6.

'knowledge-situation. Hume's critique of scepticism and Kant's resolution of it, in his opinion, had established the irrepressible character of the Self as knower.¹ The naturalistic, empirical, psychological or other realistic revivals of his day, he considered to be pale imitations of Hume who had touched the nadir of the matter, as it were, by reducing the Self to a series of impressions and causation to belief in the conjunction of events. Hume had developed to the full the methodology, according to him of arbitrary abstraction which did not do justice to the unitary character of our knowing process. It was his opinion that Hume in the West, had brought to a head the implications of all such theories which did not subscribe to the *a priori* nature of consciousness. A. C. Mukerji wrote :

His (Hume's) method is everywhere the same. He picks out the momentary aspects of the concrete reality, considers them apart from each other, and emphasizes them in their abstract character to such an extent as to reduce their relation and unity into mere illusion or words without meaning. Hence his injunction that if in philosophy a word is used without meaning, the best course to expose it is to ask for the impression from which the idea has been derived. Nominalism, solipsism, individualism, and scepticism, which are so characteristic of Hume's works are but the natural results of this original abstraction.²

According to A. C. Mukerji, all contemporary anti-idealistic tendencies derived their original inspiration

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1. STR, p. 20.
 2. STR, pp. 16-22 Quoting Hume from *Treatise*, Sec. V, p. 222.

(consciously or not). from Hume. All forms of presentationism which decentralized the knowing Self were variations of the basic Humean position. He maintained that nothing new was being said which was not to be found directly or by implication in Hume.¹ To him it seemed amazing that, with the *Critique of Pure Reason*, staring them in the face, as it were, contemporary writers could hark back to imitations of Hume at best, because, nobody in the West in his opinion could improve upon Hume as a realist and a sceptic. He wrote :

The general impression that Hume's was a sensationalistic philosophy and that Kant laid bare the fallacy of the philosophy of abstract feeling has had its disastrous consequences. Unconscious of the deeper foundation of empiricism, and interpreting Kant's criticism as a mere intellectual retort to sensationalistic exaggeration, contemporary thinkers have fallen victim to the same realistic dogma which Hume thought it beyond his power to abandon and which Kant found it beyond his power to accept.²

Kant had pointed out that connections obtaining between atomic existences, entered into their intrinsic nature and were not external to them; "that each existence possessed a being not in its Self-seclusion or unrelatedness but in its Self-transcendence or relatedness to existences beyond itself."³

Kant had clearly distinguished the subject-object relation from all inter-objective relations. The subject is

1. "The semblance of advance which they are generally supposed to have made is due to our not realizing the exact nature of Kant's answer to Hume, the consequence being a repetition of the Humean fallacy." STR, p. 13
2. STR, p. 15.
3. STR, p. 25.

the ultimate presupposition of every object of knowledge. The spontaneity of Self-consciousness is established as a unity by the multiplicity of objects which otherwise would be just chaos. The data of experience is sufficient to establish the *a priori* givenness of the Self as the knowing subject. The late appearance of Self-consciousness in a knowledge situation cannot take away from its logical priority. Self-consciousness is not a matter of temporal relation between one stage of development and another.¹ The truth is that no description can be made intelligible except in terms of these necessary principles of thought, i.e. categories. What he wished to stress here was (as Kant had pointed out) that there can be no comprehensible, recognizable or acceptable account of the presentations of facts of conscious knowledge without presupposing an extra-sensuous "unity of apperception". Following Kant he agrees that there can be no knowledge without conceptual constructs, even if they are indefinite or obscure.

Kant's account of the transcendental conditions of experience, must form, according to A. C. Mukerji, the only necessary conclusion of any theory of knowledge which begins with the separation of a subject and an object of knowledge. All genetic theories regarding the concepts of knowledge, therefore, should be considered refuted by Kant's famous transcendental deduction of the categories. He totally endorsed the view that the categories are those constitutive principles of experience which necessarily make-up the frame work of human knowledge.²

It must be made clear that A.C. Mukerji continued to believe in the ultimately rational nature of man, despite all psychological, realistic and existential denouncements (of his day) to the contrary. He did not seek to avoid these challenges but devoted many pages to detailed analyses in refutation of all theories which sought thus to "decentra-

1. N of S, p. 56.

2. Some Aspects, p. 398.

lize" the Self from its position of the inescapable ultimate knower in any knowledge situation. His appreciation of the trends of his age are reflected in these words :

Our age, inspite of its love of catholicism and humanitarianism is in many respects essentially individualistic.....In politics, it leads to the theory of 'natural right', which essentially undermines the foundation of political obligation; in ethics, it leads to individualistic hedonism which ultimately dissolves morality into selfish pursuit of pleasure; in religion it leads to pietism which spurns all creeds and insists on a non-ecclesiastical or private form of religion; and finally, in philosophy, it leads to scepticism and distrust of reason, thus over-throwing the ultimate principles of knowledge and experience.¹

He was also very conscious that these tendencies would not remain peculiar to the West for long. To him, the overthrow of the primary nature of thinking spelt a disaster could not be maximized because it would ultimately affect which the concept of human freedom. He wrote :

The only difference between the disaster which is awaiting us in the near future and that of an earlier age appears to be this that while the latter affected Europe alone, the effects of the present '*Aufklarung*' are likely to be co-extensive with the world.²

A.C. Mukerji, therefore quite openly subscribed to the so-called 'Ego-centric Paradox' and wrote that ego-centricity was inescapable for men who must think their way through all that might befall them.³ His arguments against all

1. STR, p. 11.

2. STR, p. 10.

3. "Though man has, like every other thing of the world, a particular origin and history of his own, yet there is a sense in which all the barriers of time and space

experimental and inductive theories regarding the Self can be summarized in these words : All such theories must bring the Self forward as an object of study and interpretation. The Self must be substantiated in order to be studied. In other words the genesis of self-consciousness was post-experiential. Experience disclosed a subject and object and the awareness of the self as subject constituted self-consciousness. What was missed here was the fact, in his opinion, that self-consciousness was also a unity of thought, without which nothing would become intelligible. He wrote :

When, for instance, knowledge is reduced to a peculiar characteristic of the total process from stimulus to reaction, or when the self is described as the causal nexus among a series of events, it is entirely forgotten that the stimulus, the reaction or the events are intelligible only in so far as his own relation to them is not reducible to any of the relations that may obtain between the stimulus and the reaction, and in so far as he himself is not the causal nexus of events.¹

A. C. Mukerji till the last remained convinced that a fair analysis of the knowledge-situation could not leave any reasonable man under any doubts as to the "presence in man of an unconditioned conscious principle that militates against the basic assumptions of naturalistic explanations." The inescapable priority of thought, according to him, rendered futile all anti-intellectual trends which were beginning to gain currency in his time. They, at the very

break down for him in so far as he is connected cognitively with the world as a whole which evidently includes and goes beyond the limited period and history of his earthly existence. In this sense, though historical through and through, he is the possessor of all eternity and of all reality." N of S., p. 6.

1. N of S, p. 13.

least, must satisfy the condition of conceivability. For this all inter-objective relations must be viewed as differing from the object-subject relationship. A series of particulars could not be resolved into knowledge of and about something which was not known to a knower.

So far according to A.C. Mukerji, one could easily employ the critical philosophy in refuting subjectivistic analyses of the self but thereafter a question could be raised whether the unity of apperception was conscious of its own identity or not; in other words, self-consciousness must presuppose a consciousness which was foundational and which could never be objectified. Kant, however, did not raise this point and so post-Kantian philosophy veered away in different directions which according to A. C. Mukerji did not quite do justice to his thought in this matter. The problem can be stated in these words as understood by A. C. Mukerji: If the unity of apperception was to remain irrevocably correlated to the objects of knowledge then nothing beyond an irreducible polarity had been established; if it was said that self-identity was beyond all categories then the first step toward agnosticism at best or infinite regress at worst was taken. Either consequence, that is, self-consciousness as a mediated unity, or as an unmediated thing-in-itself according to A. C. Mukerji, was gratuitous and need not follow from the Kantian position.

A. C. Mukerji interpreted Kant's statement that unity of consciousness was not the category of unity to mean that he was here indicating the presence of a foundational awareness not exhausted in the self-consciousness of "I think."¹ It is of course a matter of common knowledge that Kant did not do more than state the unity as a possibility. A. C. Mukerji chose to see it, as the presupposition of a ground for self-identity. It was his endeavour to show that this region of possibility in Kant was the point of greatest convergence as well as divergence from Vedanta.

1. Idealistic Trends, p. 117.

philosophy. It was also the only point of such convergence, because no other philosopher in the West, according to him, had so clearly come close to the positing of the transcendental Self which was beyond the categories of thought. As interpreted by A. C. Mukerji, Kant's greatest contribution lay in the establishment of the possibility of the unconditioned. Kant's successor's, according to him, instead of developing this aspect of the critical philosophy proceeded in directions which set at naught the real insight of the philosopher. He pin-pointed the problem of Self-identity in this way : the problem would seem to arise from the attempt to hold together the knowability of the ultimate knower and also the inapplicability here of all categories; otherwise the supreme subject would at once become objectified, abandoning its foundational character.

The main reason for the transformation of the Kantian position, as is well known, lay in the Hegelian criticism of abstract identity. In the opinion of A.C. Mukerji, therefore, Hegel stood as the greatest contrast¹ from the Indian position of 'knowing' the unmediated ground of all knowing.² According to Hegel, he wrote, pure being is "the isolation of an abstraction which results from Being and Nothing being placed out of touch with each other and to speak of a thing which is essentially inconceivable, is for him an indirect admission that it is not within the universe of reality."³

It will not be perhaps quite improper to say that

1. In this respect A. C. Mukerji differed from other Indian scholars who were influenced by the Hegelian philosophy in their enunciation of the Vedanta philosophy.
2. 'The relation between Hegel and Shankara in respect of their philosophical views, it has been our endeavour to make clear, is one of unreconcilable opposition.' Some Aspects, p. 420.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 412.

Hegel's legacy to the history of metaphysics is the dictum, that "the essentially inconceivable is absolutely non-existent, for that which cannot stand as the subject of a significant proposition is a mere naught or void, and so when we indulge in the agnostic's talks about the Real, we only amuse ourselves with empty words."¹

In order to clarify A.C. Mukerji's position, it may be said that he agreed with Kant that the ultimate knower was beyond all relational categories but disagreed with what became a logical corollary to the Kantian position that such a knower could only be a thing-in-itself and therefore at best an agnostic's enigma. Agnosticism, according to A.C. Mukerji, was an unacceptable philosophical position because it set limits to thought and left open every kind of possibility for mysticism.² A. C. Mukerji was very emphatic in his rejection of agnosticism and the mysticism which may follow in its wake. He wrote : ".....a complete discontinuity between the knowable and the unknowable, the thinkable and the unthinkable, is an impossible and unprofitable contrivance....."³

C. "The Role of Reasoning in Advaita Philosophy"⁴

In view of the fact that agnosticism and mysticism are more naturally associated with Indian thought, A. C. Mukerji's main aim was precisely to prepare the ground for an exposition of the place of reason in Advaita philosophy.

According to A. C. Mukerji, the most significant

1. *Ibid.*, p. 413. It was the aim of A.C. Mukerji to highlight Hegel's total rejection of an unmediated pure being in order to suggest to his colleagues that any attempts at reconciliations as, for example, the theory of a restored unity, would be futile. *Ibid.*, pp. 420-23.
2. C M, p. 3.
3. U & P N, p. 5.
4. This is the title of a paper contributed to *The Allahabad University Studies*, Vol. XII, 1936, pp. 117-129.

contribution of Indian epistemology was to the effect that "the unmediated is not in every case, an abstraction",¹ or rather, in one unique case, it is the ultimate reality. For him, the peculiarity of Upanishadic thought consisted in its offer of a "reasoned solution of an irrational problem".² He saw reasoned understanding as the inescapable pro-paedeutic toward the final vision of self-realization. He formulated the problem of Upanishadic thought in these words :

The problem of the Upanishads is...of establishing by means of reasoning that which is yet taken to be beyond the processes of reasoning. How can there be *reasoned knowledge* of the supra-rational principle ? How is philosophy of the unconditioned possible ? The answer to this apparently paradoxical question constitutes the Upanishadic contribution to the philosophy of the world.³

A. C. Mukerji saw the problem of epistemology as an attempt at establishing the ground of the possibility of all knowledge without polarising it into a subject-object relationship; to envisage a pure consciousness which is beyond self-consciousness. His understanding of the cognitive situation is mainly derived from an interpretative analysis of the following Upanishadic text :⁴

*Yenedam sarvam vijñānati tam kena vijñāniyāt;
Vijñātaram are kena vijñāniyāt.*

Br. II. 4-14; III. 8. 11.

(Who can know that, be which everything is known; My dear, how should the Knower be known ?)

This text, he held to by the crux of the matter. The role of epistemology was to establish the cogency of the all-knowing, unknowable Self, a unity by which

1. C M, p. 8.
3. C M, p. 2.

2. C M, p. 2.
4. N of S, p. 24.

diversity was repelled and yet was made possible. The entire thrust of the Advaita epistemology, according to A.C. Mukerji, was directed toward establishing the foundational character of consciousness which was indirectly envisaged by the metaphysical 'I' or subject. The Self, therefore, occupied a pivotal place "in as much as all objects owe their meaning and significance to the relations in which they stand to the Self that essentially is consciousness".¹ Further, "the Self is consciousness and not a substance possessing consciousness,"² so that the question of the bifurcation of Self-consciousness did not arise. The self was indefinable and yet undeniable³ because it was the ultimate pre-supposition of all knowable objects.⁴ A. C. Mukerji quoting from Samkaracarya's commentary on *Chhândogya-Upaniṣad* VIII, 12.5., wrote : The Self is not an agent of the activity of knowledge; on the contrary, it is essentially knowledge, knowledge, that is, is its very essence."⁵ He continues :

This whole passage, when literally translated, would run as follows : The self's agency of knowledge is its mere existence, and not its activity; just as the Sun's agency of revelation is its mere existence, and not a function.⁶

A.C. Mukerji emphasized the centrality of consciousness as the most important point of Advaita epistemology. Consciousness was the prius of reality in as much as there could be no object of knowledge which remained unrelated to it. Quoting from the commentary of Samkaracarya on *Praśnopaniṣad* VI. 2., he wrote that changes in the objects do not preclude the fact of an unchanging consciousness and

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1. N of S, p. 120.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 271
 3. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
 6. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

even, that something is not known cannot be proved in the absence of knowledge. He cited the following passages : 'None can prove something that is not known, and the attempt to prove it would be as absurd as to maintain that there is no eye though form is apprehended.' Further, 'Even when something is supposed to be non-existent, this very non-existence cannot be proved in the absence of knowledge.'¹

The presence of an all-encompassing consciousness must, therefore, be carefully distinguished from the order of the known. The crux of monism was to hold together the centrality of consciousness together with its totally unobjectifiable nature. Referring to Samkaracarya's commentary on *Kenopaniṣad* 12, A. C. Mukerji brought the two characteristics together and emphasized that they must always remain so. He wrote :

It is from this stand-point that the Self is also described as the *Sākṣi* which witnesses all objects and all changes in the objects, it is *sarva pratyayadarśi* and *citsākṣisvarūpamātra*... .. This is excellently expressed by *Sureśvara* (*Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* IV. 3) when he remarks that the self and the not-self are established in the world through perception and other means of knowledge but the not-self is in every case established only on the presupposition of the existence of the self.²

A. C. Mukerji followed the lead of Samkaracarya in order to establish the cogency of the unobjectifiable Self, the supreme reality which was the ground of all knowledge. There was a continuity between coherent thought and its presupposition which was not an "other" but the very heart of the matter. The foundational reality, therefore, inseparable from thinking which flowed from it, could not be appended at the other end of the explanation. That which made all

1. S's Theory, pp. 44-45.

2. S's Theory, p. 46.

explanations possible, that itself could not be made the object of explanation. He wrote :

A Reality literally beyond all thought and speech, as the critics of agnosticism have repeatedly urged, may be anything you please, and therefore, nothing at all..... It is not through bifurcating the world into the rational and superrational or the intellectual and the ultra-intellectual that a philosophy of the unconditioned can find a secure basis for its construction.....¹

The ground of all knowledge was not related to the order of the known, as the objects were related to each other,² and therefore could not be brought under the jurisdiction of discursive thought (*buddhi*) which according to Samkaracarya was the category hiding the tripartite division of 'knower, known and knowledge'. Knowledge was not a matter of compresence between two entities, it was rather the unity within which inter-objective relations became meaningful.

Now the question which naturally arises here is how may discursive thinking overreach itself to disclose the ground on which it stands ? A. C. Mukerji followed Samkaracarya's commentary on *Brahma Sūtra* 1. 1. 12 and *Chhāndogya Upaniṣad* VII. 1.3.³ to elucidate the method of *adhyāropāpavāda* of Vedānta literature. He wrote :

This method of aiding the discursive understanding to form a tolerably clear idea of the unconditioned principle is known in the

1. The U & PN, pp. 2-3

2. The unity of the whole is not dissipated or destructed through its manifestation in the parts. on the contrary, their plurality or internal difference is preserved through and on account of the unity of the whole.' The U & PN, p. 12.

3. N of S, pp. 337-38.

Advaita literature as the method of *adhyaropā-pavāda* or that of figurative superimposition, followed by subsequent negation.¹

Samkaracarya gave the example of a King's invisible presence, indicated by his visible insignia; so may the presence of the Self be indicated by attributing functions to it as 'knowing' etc. only in the sense of 'as if'.² The 'knowing' is not really a function of the Self. The knowing by transforming itself into a discriminatory process may, by the negative method, become an indicator to the actual presence of the Self. The 'knowledge' of self is an intuitive realization, rather than a matter of discursive reasoning.

Thought, for Samkaracarya, according to A. C. Mukerji is not an organ of Truth but is the indispensable and necessary generative condition of the ultimate intuition and consequently indispensable as a discipline which sets limits to itself.³

It will not be out of place here, to cite, somewhat at length A. C. Mukerji's own words as to what he considered to be the real core of the difference between Western philosophy and Upanishadic thought :

The conclusion then appears to be inevitable that the real strength of the orthodox systems of philosophy in general and that of Vedantism in particular lies in certain types of intuitional experiences which furnish the actual foundation of knowledge and belief. And here we come upon the most deep-lying contrast between Indian philosophy and that aspect of Western speculation which, inaugurated by the anti-scholastic respect for reason as the Supreme court of appeal in matters of

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1. N of S, p. 338.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 338
 3. Some Aspects, p. 389.
 4. STR., p. 364.

knowledge crystallized into the epistemological doctrine of Kant, and Hegel and all other subsequent philosophers of the West. Judged from this standpoint, we must candidly admit that the appeal to the Vedas does involve a reference, to an extra-philosophical standard. Of course, every man is free to define philosophy in his own way, and we should not be denied the right of so conceiving philosophy as to place intuitional experiences in the very centre of our metaphysical adventures. But then we must be careful not to impair the centrality of these experiences by the desire to find for them a place in a rational scheme of the universe.¹

These words, in effect, summarize his own philosophical position. He was not attempting a rational justification of Advaita thought. He was trying to establish a continuity of thought between reason and intuition, and here he saw the possibility of mutual help deriving from Eastern and Western traditions. The West has a long history of the emergence of the Noumenon as the unknowable, culminating in Kant. The East according to him began with the givenness of the Unknown but not the unknowable Noumenon, which it subsequently sought to appropriate by reasoned understanding and contemplative intuition. He believed that the passage from self-consciousness to Consciousness, (which as he understood the matter, in the West was broken by agnosticism or blocked by phenomenology) was kept open in the Indian tradition by the Vedantic position of monism or complete identity of knowledge and experience. He demonstrated in detail, in his various writings that this position could be defended against criticism from the points of view which advocated some form or other of identity-in-difference.

1. Some Aspects, pp. 383-94.

Briefly, he saw Samkaracarya's position as a reasoned justification of intuition as a necessary and unavoidable step toward the experience of Self-Knowledge. He believed that the epistemological foundation of idealistic thought in the West could open the way to a greater understanding of the Upanishadic heritage as a system of thought and not merely as a piece of mythological literature.

Chapter Seven

The World as Real in Vedanta

Re-Interpreting Samkara*

Kokileshvar Bhattacharya came to the study of Vedanta through Sanskrit. He belonged to an earlier generation of scholars and was one of those who felt called upon to face squarely the challenge to his own tradition. He sets forth the aim of his works in the clearest words :

Most of the writers on Samkara-Vedanta have dwelt almost exclusively upon the traditional illusory aspect and have tended to relegate its realistic aspect to the background. I have found it necessary to refuse to accept the

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- * It is to be noted that this author uses the shortened 'Samkara' rather than Samkaracarya. Since this name is used very often, I have used it in this variation for this Chapter to avoid confusion.

Some of the works of Bhattacharya have been abbreviated in this and in the following Chapter as follows :

An Intro— *An Introduction to Vedanta Philosophy*
(Calcutta : n.d.)

Divine Purpose—'Divine Purpose in Samkara-Vedanta',
(*Calcutta Oriental Journal*, Vol. II, no. 9, 1935),
pp. 205-214.

Interpretation—'An Interpretation of Samkara's Doctrine of *Maya*', *K. B. Pathak Commemoration Volume*
(Poona : Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1934) pp. 159-165.

traditional ascetic interpretation *alone* to the entire neglect and inexcusable exclusion of the realistic; because it seems to me that the realistic side was very prominent in Samkara's own mind and I have conceived it to be my duty to try to present a concise account of his philosophy in its realistic and objective truthfulness with constant reference to the original sources.¹

Bhattacharya states that his aim is to refute the charge that in the Advaita system, the world is treated as illusory, as mere appearance;² that Brahma(n) is a 'difference-less pantheistic empty void'; that it has nothing to contribute toward conduct of life in human society.³ Elsewhere in this context he refers to Paul Deussen's opinion that Samkara's exegesis of the following well-known text led to the theory of illusionism. 'Just as, my dear by one clod of clay all that is made of clay becomes known, the modifications being only a name arising from speech while the truth is that it is just clay.' (Chh. VI. 1.4). He writes :

This at least is Deussen's interpretation and he sees here in this celebrated passage the germ of illusion-theory which has become the basis through its adoption by Samkara, of the orthodox Vedanta system.⁴

MSV—'Maya in Samkara-Vedanta, its objectivity', (*Poona Oriental Society Journal*, no. 37, 1939) pp. 336-342.

SBL—Sree Gopal Basu-Mallick Lectures (1930-31), (Calcutta : Calcutta University Press, 1932).

Vidya—'Vidya and Avidya', (*Calcutta Oriental Journal*, Vol. I no. 12, 1934), pp. 351-358.

WSP—'Was Samkara a Pantheist ?' (*Review of Philosophy and Religion*, Vol. III, no., 1 1932) pp. 1-12.

1. SBL, p. 5.

2. An Intro., p. 86.

Ibid., p. 127.

4. Interpretation, p. 159.

Bhattacharya agrees with Deussen in this opinion but seeks to show that Samkara's writings on this Text as well as other like passages can be construed differently thereby doing greater justice to the acharya's philosophy. According to him the reason for inaccuracy in modern interpretations of the great *māya-vāda*, both in India as well as in Europe, lies in imperfect knowledge of the writings of Samkara.¹ He writes :

It has also been held by some that the *Māya-Vāda* as is found in the Samkara System was the creation of his own fertile brain and it has no sanction and support in the most ancient Upanishads and in the *Brahma-Sūtra*.²

It is the aim of Bhattacharya to establish the fact that although it is true that the idea of the ideality of the world could be derived from Samkara's writings, careful scrutiny would reveal it not to be his intended meaning — "It is most erroneous to suppose as has been done by many," he says, "that in order to retain the unity of Brahman, Samkara has abolished the world as false."³ It would be equally unfair to ascribe pantheism to his philosophy as has been done by many critics.⁴ He quotes Dr. Galloway :

Even the distinction of worshipper and worshipped dwindles and fades, till the Hindu thinker [recognised that he was one with All, with Brahman. The very appearance of difference is explained away, it is the product of illusion. The Vedanta is a strict Pantheism.

Also, Dr. Flint,

Along with the affirmation of an impersonal God, there is the negation of the reality of the worlds — both of sense and consciousness. In other words, the issue of this kind of

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1. SBL, p. 7. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 3. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 198ff.
4. WSP. pp. 2-4. (The quotations are not documented by the author.)

Pantheism is a-cosmism. But Pantheism is just as likely to issue in theism.

It becomes clear from reading such introductory remarks to his writings that his interpretation of Vedanta took shape out of the need to answer these criticisms. All exegeses written in his time, it may be said, were in fact answers to the charges of pantheism on the one hand and world-negation on the other. It is interesting to note in this context that Indian authors seemed to have accepted the criticisms as valid, since they chose to defend Vedanta. There is, for example, no attempt at understanding the implications of Vedanta in the light of these criticisms which perhaps could have yielded more fruitful results.

Brahman as ultimate reality.

The supreme reality of the 'Vedanta philosophy, writes Bhattacharya* is Brahman which is the essence of all conscious and unconscious phenomena and "it abides independently of and transcends, the relation of subject and object." (Br. Up. Bh. 5.5.2).¹

Although the ground of these manifestations, it remains unchanged and unaffected by the change. The technical term employed for Brahman by Vedantins is '*nirguṇa*'. *Nirguṇa*, according to Bhattacharya (lit. quality-less) does not mean an abstraction from which naturally there could be no passage to the actual world of many.² "*Nirguṇa* means that anything phenomenal does not constitutively belong to Brahma (n)". (Gita Bh. 13.2).³

Bhattacharya writes that Brahman, far from being an abstraction has a nature (*svārūpa*) which is Being-Consciousness-Bliss (*Saccidananda*). These are not attributes but in their inseparable identity they are Brahman itself.

* All references to Samkara's works are incorporated in the text. Bhattacharya's own writings are document in footnotes.

1. SBL, p. 9.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Being of Brahman is presupposed in all forms of existence and we ourselves are witnesses to existence which is conscious and hence Being is identical with consciousness. (Mun. Up. Bh. 2.2.10).¹ According to Samkara, "consciousness which has no existence cannot be admitted". (V. S. Bh. 3.2.21).² Bliss is inseparable from consciousness and existence and eternally belongs with them (Br. Up. Bh. 4.4.6); the three together constitute the *nature* or *svabhāva* of Brahman.³ Brahman is also stated to be the highest good (*kalyāṇatama*) in its positive aspect.⁴

The world, then, according to Bhattacharya, is the manifestation of this nature of Brahman. Brahman as Being, Consciousness and Bliss is present continuously through all transformations of names and forms in the world. Bhattacharya writes, that according to Samkara :

The ether and the like are accompanied by the *being* of Brahma (n) which is its characteristic nature; and

as *knowledge* is an accompaniment of all objects everywhere, everything has knowledge as its *swarūpa* (nature); further

The Bliss Divine is present behind all the joys connected with the mutually exclusive objects of the world.

brahmaṇo'pi sattālakṣaṇaḥ svabhāvah akā'ādiṣu anuvartamāno dṛśyate (V. S. Bh. 2.1.6).

cinmātrānugamat sarvatra citsvarūpatā gamyate (Br. Up. Bh. 2.4.7).

ānandena vyāvṛtta viśayabuddhigamya ānandah anugantum śakyate, (Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. II.7.).⁵

Brahman, in order to realise its own nature creates the world which is moving from the lowest to the highest

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 12, (emphasis in text).

4. Vidya, p. 356.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

stages. It is not that the world is logically deduced from Brahman, writes Bhattacharya, but it is to be taken as it is. (*yathāprāpta*, Br. Up. Bh. 2.1.20). He quotes the following passage to illustrate his point :

Already in existence as the Self is before creation, it causes itself to undergo modifications, as the Self of the modification.

*pūrvasiddho'pihi sannātmā vīśeṣeṇa,
vikārātmanā parināmayamāsa ātmānamiti.*

(V.S. Bh. 1.4.26.)¹

He writes further that this movement has become possible for the world because behind each stage, the eternal principle (*pūrvasiddhah ātmā*) is present, which is gradually expressing itself in and through these stages or changes. Brahman is not remote to the world but the very ground on which it stands. Creation moreover, is continuous. It is perpetually going on since its goal of diversification to this day is not exhausted. (*nādyāpi bahubhāvanām prayojanam nirṛttam*, Chh. Up. Bh. VI. 3.2.)²

Brahman, according to him, therefore, is the material as well as efficient cause of the world. (V. S. Bh. 1-4. 23-26).³ It cannot be separated from its manifestation, that is, the world. It will be seen at once that a realistic diversification of Brahman may not be distinguishable from pantheism. Bhattacharya is aware of this possibility and refers to Samkara's own refutation of the philosophy of one *Vṛttikāra* mentioned by him in his commentaries, and who seems to have advocated a pantheistic position. The unity that Samkara maintains is not affected by the multiplicity or it does not become a composite in creation. The relation is not that of extension in space or succession in time. The essential nature of Brahman as One only does not change with its manifestations of the world. Bhattacharya quotes from the following sources in support of this contention : "The one Brahman cannot be support

1. An Intro., p. 123. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 17. 3. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

of many qualities." (Br. Up. Bh. 2.1.14); "The One Reality cannot become diversified." (Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. Bh. 1.12), etc.

Bhattacharya concludes, therefore, that the absurdity of holding together unity and multiplicity cannot arise.¹ The One remains self-sufficient, independent and ever retains its own uniform nature. It takes upon itself the various forms of *nāma-rūpa* (name and form) to reveal the inexhaustible treasure which is its nature.² Quoting from Br. Bh. 2.1.20 in support of his statement, Bhattacharya writes :

His unity does not become *composite* by the production of *nāma-rūpa*, like a tree composed of its branches, flowers, etc., and a cloth dyed with variegated colours. Then Brahman would not have been described as of uniform nature.³

The unique character of this relationship is brought out by Bhattacharya in his writings on vital energy (*prāṇa*) as the world-seed of creation. Brahman, in its undifferentiated stage is called unmanifest (*avyakta*) wherein resides the primordial energy in its latent form as the seed of vital energy (*prāṇa-bīja*) and in this form it is also called *māyā*. He writes :

Samkara informs us that the *prāṇabīja* exists in *pralaya*, dissolution of this world, and also in *suṣupti* deep slumber of finite self, in undeveloped or *avyākṛta* condition.....(Pr. Up. Bh. VI. 1.)⁴

1. WSP, p. 7.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 4. The author quotes the gloss of Anandagiri, 'na hi sṛṣṭaṁ sṛṣṭurārthānṛtaṁ : tasyaiva tena tena rūpeṇa māyāvivat avasthānam.' Br. Up. Bh. 1.3.5. (There is no difference between the creation and the creator : (the creator) abides like a magician assuming other forms).

3. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

4. SBL, p. 7.

The vital energy (*prāṇa-śakti*) in the unmanifest form is synonymous with *māyā*. Brahman is the substrate for *māyā* which cannot be explained without reference to the "Being of Brahman whose energy it is" (V. S. Bh. 1. 4. 3).¹ The seed as vital energy remains undifferentiated but distinct in Brahman; it distributes itself gradually, at the time of creation, into three forms, the gross, the subtle and the causal. He quotes from *Upadeśasāhasrī* in corroboration of this statement :

That one seed, called *Māyā*, evolved into the three states which come one after another again and again. The Self, the Substratum of *Māyā*, though one only and immutable, appears to be many like reflections of the sun in water. (XVII. 2)²

There is thus, according to Bhattacharya a relation of identity between latent vital energy (*avyākṛta-prāṇa*) and Brahman; the former is submerged in the latter, but not obliterated.³ In all its successive forms, the vital energy (*prāṇa*) works not apart from but in identity with Brahman.⁴

Prāṇa in its manifest form is called the *sūtra* (thread), because "it passes through all, it sustains all, as a piece of thread passes through and contains in it, all the flowers of a garland."⁵ *Prāṇa*, then may be understood as the creative energy of Brahman. It has no distinct nature of its own and therefore cannot be linked to the *pradhana* or material principle of the Samkhya philosophy.⁶ All creative differentiations begin with the vibrations initiated

1. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

2. *Upadeśasāhasrī*, Tr. by Swami Jagadananda (Madras : Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1973).

3. SBL, p. 73.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 73.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 75. The Text quoted is from Br. Up. Bh. 5. 5. 1.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 80.

in this vital energy :

It is the vibration of *Prāṇa* which is contained in the Cosmic Fire etc., and in the Psychic Speech etc. (Br. Up. Bh. I. 5. 23)¹

The creation of the world, therefore, is a fulfilment of the purpose of Brahman itself. According to Bhattacharya, Samkara has stressed the fact that the created world — the emerging changes — always carry with them the idea of a purpose *as yet unrealised*. (V.S. Bh. 4.3.14). The creation, therefore, has a final purpose which is to realise the purpose of Brahman (V. S. Bh. 1. 1. 1.).² Bhattacharya writes, citing from the *Gītā-Bhāṣya* 13. 17 as well.

‘*Jñeyameva jñātam sat jñānaphalamiti jñānagamyamucyate*. Brhman is the phala, i. e., the final End. Hence it is that in Vedanta, it is called as *paryantam* i. e., the last or final End.

‘*avagati paryantam jñānam, nātahparam kimcit jñātavyamasti*’. When this end is realised, there remains no further end for realisation and our desires and aspirations get their fulfilment. (V. S. Bh. 1. 1. 1).³

Bhattacharya goes on to maintain that according to Samkara the entire creation is a graded dispersion of the creative force of Brahman, which always remains as the substrate for it. All individuals are interwoven in the Infinite Self which is Brahman. In the lower grades, the Infinite is realised unconsciously. “It is only in man that the Infinite is present and is being realised consciously.”⁴

The Supreme Objective of Human Life.

Bhattacharya then undertakes to explain what is meant by the Supreme End of human life. This, he maintains, is to realise the Divine Purpose of Brahman. It is to be noted.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

2. An Intro., p. 41.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 41, footnote 1.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 42-43.

that in this context, Bhattacharya uses the term God for Brahman. He writes :

The manifested *nāma-rūpas* are to be taken as a means for the realisation of the purposes (*Samkalpas*) of God.....These *Samkalpas* are but Divine Ideas existing as potential powers in Brahman—but they realize themselves in the particular individual objects which they evolve and sustain. The phenomenal objects are expressions in time of the Ideas which are not in time and the ideas can express themselves freely in time. (Br. Up. Bh. 2.4.10).¹

Also,

On the production of the particulars, the universal *ākrtis* or Ideas are constantly present. (Br. Up. Bh. 1-3.28).²

Every individual thing, writes Bhattacharya therefore, in this system has a dual aspect, one Divine or Infinite and the other finite. In so far as the conscious finite self can bring itself in tune with the Divine Purpose, it may transcend its limiting aspects. On the plane of the mundane, perfection remains an ideal only, and therefore the goal of human life is ever toward transcendence of the state of imperfection. Bhattacharya goes on to say that the purpose which activates the manifested world has been called 'good' by Samkara :

The word 'good' signifying the cause extends to the effects in the shape of the world just as clay does to its modifications — jar and the rest. Just as wherever we have a notion of the jar, it is always accompanied by the notion of clay, so in the same manner, the notion of the world is always accompanied by the notion of the 'Good'. (Chh. Up. Bh. 2.2.1).³

1. Divine Purpose, p. 206.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

3. *Sādhūśabdavācya 'rītho' brahma vā sarvathāpi lokadikārye*

Since 'good' permeates the world, it is actually attainable in the life of man. According to Bhattacharya, this exactly is the teaching of the Gita, wherein God asks man to engage in good works for the greater stability of 'dharma' and the eradication of evil. "We must identify ourselves with the Good Purpose (*sādhvārtham*) operating within the world as well as in us."¹

After emphasizing the indispensable role of good action in the world, he takes up for consideration the more familiar repudiation of karma as means of knowledge, known to have been enunciated by Samkara. He writes that the prevalent opinion about Samkara's system is that he has left no place for action in it. He says "To our mind, this is an idea which cannot be accepted and which must be condemned as erroneous, with all the emphasis which we can command."² Bhattacharya adduces many arguments to substantiate his point that Samkara made a gradation of the types of work which are necessary for the purification of the mind and as such are indispensable to self-realization. Samkara, as is evident from his commentary on the Gita, rejected only the works performed with a view to selfish ends. He advocated the performance of *nitya-karmas* and all such actions which may lead to the spiritual regeneration of the mind.

Works are meant for the purification of the mind. Selfish desires and passions are impediments to self-realisation. Unselfish, prescribed duties when not done, with self-seeking motives, remove these impediments, effect purification of the mind, and thus help the final realisation.³

*anugatam : yathā ghatādidṛṣṭirmṛdādidṛṣṭyānygataiva.....
sādhvārthasya lokādikāryeṣu kāranasya anugatatrāḥ,
mṛdādivat ghatādivikāreṣu.*

1. *Ibid.*, p. 213

2. An Intro., p. 147.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 140.

Bhattacharya then makes the point that action being enjoined for the spiritual uplift of man it cannot be said that there is no place for moral striving in the Vedānta system. Man's place is in society and he cannot escape his obligations toward his fellow human being. Moreover, it is not also a case of blind obedience to rituals that is advocated by Saṃkara, who writes :

Man chooses his *end* according to his own light. The Śāstras only present before him the lower and higher lines of conduct, but do not compel him to select a particular course of action. (Br. Up. Bh. 2.1.20).¹

In this way the sphere of moral endeavour is given due importance and cannot be said to have been neglected by the older Vedānta, least of all by Saṃkara. Bhattacharya interprets Saṃkara's statements about action and knowledge, as referring to separate achievements; to mean a gradation of higher and lower ends. Karma must be "superceded and included"² in the final aim of life which is knowledge of the Self. "All works" he maintains, "are organic to this one central purpose."³

Pulling together all the threads of his arguments, we may see that Bhattacharya combined various statements from different books in order to present his case of a realistic interpretation of Saṃkara-Vedānta. His view can be summarised as follows : Brahman transcends the world but does not exclude the world. The Supreme aim of human life is to achieve an attunement to the good which is immanent in the world, fulfilling thereby the Divine Purpose of Realization.

Bhattacharya's refutation of the traditional mode of understanding Vedānta.

According to Bhattacharya *māyā* instead of being the principle of non-reality is the creative energy of Brahman,

1. *Ibid.*, p. 158. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 150. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

radiating into the diversities of forms and names but never leaving the anchorage of its groundedness in the ultimate Reality. This dispersion of the power of Brahman cannot be called false and Samkara is misunderstood when he is charged with saying so. The question then arises as to what does Samkara mean when he says, for example :

The objects perceived to exist in the waking state are unreal for this reason also, that they do not really exist either at the beginning or at the end. Such objects (of experience) as mirage, etc., do not really exist either at the beginning or at the end. Therefore they do not (really) exist in the middle either. This is the decided opinion of the world. The several objects perceived to exist really in the waking state are also of the same nature. Though they (the objects of experience) are of the same nature as illusory objects, such as mirage, etc., on account of their non-existence at the beginning and at the end, still they are regarded as real by the ignorant, that is, the persons that do not know *Ātman*.¹

According to Bhattacharya such passages have leant colour to the theory of illusionness which he is in effect trying to set aside. For his interpretation of *māyā* he boldly goes to the most crucial definition given by Samkara in this regard in his opening statemet for the commentary on the *Vedānta Sūtra*. To bring out the point of Bhattacharya's interpretation he may be quoted at length.

In the famous introduction appended to the "*Brahma-Sūtras*", Samkara has, at the very commencement of his immortal work, discussed and given us the sense in which he will use the term *avidyā* throughout his system;..... The

1. Samkara's commentary on *Māndūkya-Kārikā*, II.6 (tr. by Swami Nikhilananda).

Introduction clearly points out in whatever connection Samkara would use the word *Avidyā*, he would always mean this that — under the influence of the *Avidyā*, the people forget or ignore the *Svarūpa* or the *distinct nature* of the Self or the causal reality, and it is entirely resolved into or *identified* with its emerging effects or states. And the states or effects are erroneously looked upon as the 'nature' or *Svarūpa* of the Self.¹

Working with this interpretation, Bhattacharya writes that falsity may obtain in Samkara in two senses : firstly, if Brahman or *Ātman* is considered resolved entirely into its manifestations which would be a kind of pantheism; and secondly, if the diversification of the world is separated from its ground and looked upon as self-sufficient. This is to say that neither should the prior causal reality be made to lose its unity in the multiplicity of the world nor should the multiplicity be given independent status,

Samkara calls such a world (i.e., separated from Brahman) unreal, false, *asatya*. *Everywhere he has held the world and the changes, Vikāras to be unreal and false in this sense only.*²

Bhattacharya himself carefully adduces certain reasons for the prevalent mode of understanding the Vedanta of Samkara. He writes that Samkara's frequent use of the terms 'rabbit-horns' (*Śaśa-viṣṇa*), 'barren woman's son' (*vandhya-putra*), 'sky-flower' (*akūśa-kusuma*), etc., have created the impression that such is our world also.

....the critics....from the mere mention of the terms in the Bhasyas, like *Śaśa-Viṣṇa* (rabbit-horn) *maricika* (mirage) etc., etc., jumped at

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1. An Intro., p. 108. See Introduction to this book p. 2-5..
 2. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-104. (emphasis in text.)

once at the conclusion that the world is false in the Vedānta.¹

Another reason according to him, for adducing a mirage-like quality to the world, is Samkara's usage of dream imagery, mainly in the context of the discourse between *Ajātaśatru* and *Balaki* occurring in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II. 1. 15-18). It is his contention that Samkara's comparison of the walking and dreaming states need not lead to "the idea of the falsity of our world-experiences".² In substantiation of his interpretation, Sastri, firstly gives his own rendering of Samkara's commentaries on such crucial texts as 'All this verily is Brahman' (*Sarvam Khalvidam brahma*),³ 'All this is Ātman alone' (*ātmaivedam Sarvam*),⁴ 'There is no vestige of diversity here (*neha nānā'sti kimcana*)'.⁵ Secondly, he comments upon the methodology involved in the 'not this, not this' (*neti neti*) texts.⁶ Thirdly, the author gives his own explanation of Samkara's total rejection of action (*karma*) as means for Self-realization. In his view Samkara neither repudiated the active life nor did he advocate a withdrawal from the world.⁷ He emphasizes that nowhere has Samkara negated or abolished the world and its changing forms.⁸ The world is always to be known as grounded in Brahman and not existing by itself in which case alone, it will be false. Similarly, in the context of the Self, it is declared to be false only, when it is resolved entirely into its experiencing states, when these are taken to be of the nature of the Self.⁹

With this criterion of falsity, Bhattacharya construes the meanings of the texts mentioned above, such as 'All this verily is Brahman' (*sarvam khalvidam brahma*) and 'there is no vestige of diversity here' (*neha nānā'sti kimcana*),

1. *Ibid.*, p. 93. 2. *Ibid.*, p. 96. 3. *Ibid.*, p. 105-106.

4. *Ibid.* 5. *Ibid.*, p. 111. 6. *Ibid.*, p. 337.

7. SBL, p. 145. 8. An Intro., p. 103.-104.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

to mean that Brahman is not to be totally reduced to its manifestations. Wherever the Upanishads deny the actuality of the world process, the meaning, according to Bhattacharya is, that Brahman is stated to be a unity which remains unaffected by its diversification. The negative Texts deny in dependent status to the name-form structure of the world. They point to the fact that it is Brahman, which has dispersed itself into the manifestations, and therefore they are not real in themselves but in Brahman only.¹

It is the same sense in which Samkara has denied the ultimate supremacy of action. If the individual expends himself totally in action, then he is working with a falsehood. When action is subsumed to a life of religious endeavour, it becomes moral and uplifting and becomes capable of raising man to the highest pinnacle of Self-realization.

Bhattacharya's interpretation of Samkara-Vedanta had a great impact on the educated people of India. His philosophy was hailed as a real contribution toward modernising the ancient heritage, the editors of *Vedānta Kesari* wrote to him :

Your interpretation has shown that Advaita is not simply a philosophy of asceticism but a gospel of life that can form the basis of dynamic activism.....Advaita, as interpreted by you, can again become a living force in our national life, and form not only a matter for the intellectual satisfaction of Pandits but a gospel of life that can inspire and sustain the youth of the land in fields of life that are open to them.²

1. *Ibid*, pp. 101-102.

2. From a letter written to the author by the editors of *Vedānta Kesri*, Madras. (Quoted by the author, *Sreegopal Basu Mallick Fellowship Lectures*, Calcutta 1931, p. vii).

An evaluation of Bhattacharya's contribution is given in the next Chapter following that of A. C. Mukerji. After the passage of nearly half a century, we are in a better position to see these efforts in a better perspective than was possible for the contemporaries of the philosophers themselves.

Chapter Eight

Neo-Vedanta as 'a Rational Philosophy' and a 'Gospel of Life'

A. A. C. Mukerji :

The importance of the two new orientations introduced in the previous two Chapters may be now examined. First the contribution of A. C. Mukerji is taken up for consideration and then that of Bhattacharya.

It is rather difficult to make a fair assessment of A. C. Mukerji's contribution to the philosophy of Advaita, because firstly he has not deviated from the classical exegeses regarding Samkaracarya's thought on intuition and secondly his understanding of the bare essentials of the Kantian epistemology also seems legitimate. What may be questioned here is the soundness of the juxtaposition of the two.

A. C. Mukerji saw a common problem arising out of all knowledge situations. If the object of thought is completely external to it then no knowledge of it is possible; if on the other hand, it is already a part of the process or if thought is constitutive of reality, then any inquiry regarding reality becomes gratuitous.¹ To say that contemplative thinking is a process of progressive clarification of the vague prefigurations given to us, is only to push the problem one step back, because 'philosophy does not represent a passage from ignorance to knowledge, nor does it stultify itself by aiming at what is already an accomplished fact.'²

1. Reality & Ideality, p. 216

2. *Ibid.*

A. C. Mukerji identified and accepted this paradox, enunciated in this manner, as the almost intractable problem of revelation and reason, or alternately, as being the initial step toward agnosticism leading the way to mysticism, because the unknowable of the agnostic stood self-revealed only in mystical experience.¹ According to A.C. Mukerji, the Upanishadic formulation of man's desire for knowledge and his eligibility for it, falls outside this polarity of reason and mystical intuition.²

Reality, therefore, as understood by A. C. Mukerji, was neither anti-rational nor altogether beyond reason. Yet rational analysis of experience was indispensable to an enquiry regarding our knowledge situation. A. C. Mukerji tended to use the words 'reason', 'consciousness' and 'thought' almost interchangeably. He used these words as corresponding to the Sanskrit word '*buddhi*',³ and as signifying a mode of direct apprehension of the object (of knowledge) carrying with it the inescapable possibility of an indirect envisagement of the foundation which made all knowledge possible.

Reason possesses the power of a kind of introspective visualization which as universal support of the definable entities, cannot be discursively apprehended in the same way in which a particular entity is known, by distinguishing it from that by which it is limited.⁴

With the distinction between direct apprehension and indirect envisagement, we come to A. C. Mukerji's own understanding of Upanishadic thought. The quest for Truth demands that human thinking be transcended. In order to envisage the region of this transcendence, reason must see to the breaking off of links between words and meaning by which our ordinary thinking is controlled. The mind must

1. CM, p. 3

2. CM, p. 3

3. CM, p. 4.; N of S, p. 310.

4. CM, p. 3.

cut loose from the memory of this chain of terminology which is our anchorage to the world. This is what the Yoga tradition calls the process of *Śabdasaṅketasmṛtipariśuddhi*,¹ which literally means, cleansing of memory of the impurity of linguistic conventionality.

This inner demand of thought takes the form of citing the Scriptures as an indication for opening up an extra-logical dimension of the search for Truth. This special dimension of anti-intellectualism, he agrees, is integral to Advaita thought, (which may not be different from all modes of Western thinking) and he insists that this "is nothing short of an extra-philosophical criterion"² of Knowledge. It is a kind of envisagement, intuition, extraordinary experience, direct apprehension and so on, that is, a mode of understanding where meaning and experience are one. Neither sense nor reason (each by itself) can reproduce the content of this extraordinary experience.³ The identity of the Self and Brahman, the goal of Vedanta philosophy, cannot be established by perception, or reason, because these are inalienably subject-object oriented. Thus we are inevitably and inescapably led toward that intuitive experience of immediacy spoken of by the texts. A.C. Mukerji thinks: "This intuition is then the ultimate criterion, of which reasoning, even when it is supported by the sacred texts, is a subordinate auxiliary."⁴

In raising reason to the plane of mediation between experience and that by which all meaning is made possible, he has given it a new role which is quite different to the one it previously enjoyed. The place of reason in Vedanta philosophy was always considered to be indispensable but not a sufficient condition for the unveiling of Truth contained in the text. The aim of the traditional mode of exegesis was to hold together in a coherent unity, revelation, reason and experience. Revelation is unique to the Texts but it is to be

1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. Some Aspects, p. 383.

3. Ibid., p. 388.

4. Ibid., p. 389

appropriated by reason and realized by direct experience. All philosophies must start and end with experience. The direct experience of the world can be cancelled only by another 'direct experience' or realization of Truth. The role of reason, therefore, is interpretative and never constitutive of values. Reason, as a matter of fact, in its inferential mode, is restricted by many systems because being experience-based, it cannot speak for the extra-mundane dimension which forms the subject matter of religious philosophy. Vedanta rejects analogy as well, as a method of demonstrating that which lies beyond wordly experience. The leap of intuitive reason, necessary for validating the argument can obtain only between similar objects, belonging to the same dimension of experience. Analogy, by virtue of this leap can yield a very high degree of probability but must always remain short of certainty. Reason, therefore is called "yukti" or 'tarka', that is, of no independent logical value but as ancillary to scriptural testimony' (V. S. II. i. ii.)¹. It may be added that the texts also are sources of mediate knowledge (for the ordinary person)² and like reason, necessary but not sufficient condition for the dawn of Knowledge. The task, in front of the interpreter, therefore, is to press reason to the service of understanding the mystery of experience in the world, so that one may become desirous of 'experiencing' that ultimate felicity which texts indicate to be the supreme goal of human life.

In the Vedanta system, we find experience forming the parameters of the scale of knowability in the world. Reason seeks to make clear the enigmatic continuity, which obtains between everyday experience and the 'experience' which forms the subject matter of Śruti Texts. Thus, reason is not

1. *Ibid.*, p. 16

2. An exception is always made for those seekers who may 'receive' enlightenment, not because they have qualified themselves but because the dimension of Grace (*kṛpā*) is non-causal (*ahetuka*).

given the role of unravelling the mystique of revelation; but to awaken the yearning; the initial movement toward Self-realization, or rather to help in understanding this movement as the stirrings of discrimination between what the scriptures talk about and experience in the world. Thus, revelation, reason and experience held in a close unity, seek to preclude, dogma on the one hand and mysticism on the other.

It is possible to say that reason is even superfluous where Truth is self-revealed; but in the 'absence' of Grace (*ahetukakṛpā*), reason lends plausibility to the utterly unexampled, non-paralleled message of the texts. Reason, therefore, in this view, would seem to be indispensable, but not instrumental in revealing truth.¹

If the core of the tradition is understood in this fashion, then such attempts as A. C. Mukerji's to bring the Kantian "What can I know?" alongside the Vedantic first premise, "Why should I know Brahman?" seem less than fruitful. Western idealism aimed at establishing the epistemic priority of reason. In the Indian context the focus had been on distinguishing between not the knower and the known (*dṛaṣṭṛ* and *dṛiṣya*) but between knowledge and the known, (*dṛk* and *dṛiṣya*), that is the self and the not-self.

A. C. Mukerji and other such scholars who wanted to emphasize the rational element in Vedanta philosophy, did not allow for the crucial fact that epistemology in the West had developed as a retreat from ontology. In trying to compare reason in its triadic setting of revelation-reason-experience, with reason as an independent arbiter of meaning, they leant themselves to a blurring of issues. They did not realize that the West had long since broken with its Greek tradition and the Upanishadic "Know Thyself" had no parallel in the idealistic systems they were interested in. This is apparent in the use of the words "soul" and "self" almost interchangeably by many and

1. *Naiṣkarmya Siddhi*, III, Śloka 5 & 53.

especially by A. C. Mukerji.¹

This slurring over the difference is basic to the understanding of Neo-Vedantic thought. If we understand 'soul' to mean 'creaturehood' than the counterpart of this concept could be connoted by the term '*jiva*' of Indian philosophy. In Western thought it was the human dimension of being created by God and the soul's destiny in fulfilling the divine promise of salvation, which was at stake. The epistemological inquiry centering around the Kantian position was primarily concerned not with containing reasons (as declared by Kant) but with legitimising its constitutionality so that a scientific grounding may be provided to our experience in the world and to the goodness of the moral will. If Kant had not proceeded beyond stating the unity of apperception, it was because this "beyond" did not arise from within the setting of his philosophic understanding. What appears '*svayam-prakāśa*', '*svayamsiddha*' (self-luminous, self-evident) to A. C. Mukerji, does so by virtue of the long heritage of Vedantic thought. Further, this self-evident self is the sole 'unspoken' but eminently 'speaking' topic of total concern for Vedanta. In appending it at the end of the scale of the cogitational framework, it becomes a pedagogical device only for overcoming agnosticism. Kant, being the great philosopher that he was could hardly have leant himself to it. For Indian thinkers to take up the question at this stage, in order to indicate the possibility of an ontology could only indicate a certain lack of appreciation of the task that Kant had set himself. Having entered the stream, they could only be carried forward on the waves of the idealistic-realistic debate, as can be seen from the present day studies in Departments of Philosophy.

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1. "The Nature of Soul", *The Cultural Heritage of India* 2nd ed. Calcutta. The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Calcutta; 2nd ed., pp. 475-493. The word used by him for 'soul' is *ātman* in this essay.

A.C. Mukerji's justification of Upanishadic thought as a system of philosophy, then, can be called, a step toward its Westernization because with the raising of epistemology to the primary position, a major transition towards the 'secularisation' of these studies was effected. A. C. Mukerji had sought to meet the charge of "intellectual incoherence" but the criterion for defence used by him namely the thematisation of the 'unknown' but not the 'unknowable' precisely had provided the bases for condemnation. He did realize that he had not been able to build the much cherished bridge between discursive knowing and intuitive knowing.

By pursuing the details of A. C. Mukerji's philosophical thought, we can discover for ourselves the spirit of the times in which these scholars had lived and worked. The question at issue here, as elsewhere, is one of the adequacy of the method of estimating Vedanta in ways other than the given mode of its explication. Traditional exegeses held together the triad of revelation, reason and experience. By emphasizing reason in its epistemological setting, a shift in perspective was effected which was perhaps not seen in its full implication by the author. Together with the demand for "intellectual coherence", went the need to assert the reality of the world as the only sphere of morally responsible action. In Bhattacharya's philosophy we encounter Advaita as a gospel of life. We cannot but raise the question whether this interpretation can be held together with Samkaracarya's *mokṣa*-orientated philosophy regarding the realization of *ātman* as Brahman.

B. Kokilesvar Bhattacharya :

By following Bhattacharya along the path of realistic interpretation it can be seen clearly that he has not given due importance to the structure of veiling, which forms the central core of Samkaracarya's exegesis. Samkaracarya has raised the question of the necessity of the principle of unreality as basic to the understanding of the human condition. The predicament is precisely this, that the world

is never questioned by us. Given the experience of this world, whence can come the thought of its cancellation unless the possibility of it is made reasonable by analogical examples from experience itself. The "illusion" that Samkaracarya is propounding, does not obtain if it is true, in respect simply of the world, but as to the meaning of the world. Śastri has maintained that this meaning derives from the Ground. The world is real because the Base is real. The manifestations are, admittedly, not real-in-themselves.

The traditional Advaita point of view has been that the meaning given to the world is of pragmatic value only and must stand cancelled by the knowledge of the One Reality. Just as the directions of East, West, North and South do not obtain anywhere but in the realm of praxis, and as such they are intelligible as experiences inescapably vulnerable to cancellation; similarly the world is a necessary presence for us. Samkaracarya, therefore, propounds the reason for this mystery in experiencing the unreal as the real just as one may seek to explain why the limitless horizon should be quartered off as East, West, South and North.

It would seem that Bhattacharya has confined himself to the description of Brahman as causal-seed without stating the further crucial Advaitic position that the causal manifestation itself is also at once eminently a case of concealment. In other words it belongs within the realm of *māyā*. It is due to *māyā* that Brahman appears as the cause of the world.

Māyā is the principle of holding together the revelation of Truth as One only, and our experiences to the contrary. Bhattacharya evidently does not wish to join with the theistic criticism of Samkaracarya and speak in the language of religion which understands Brahman as creator and the world as created by him. He seeks only to condition the reality of the world. Samkaracarya in fact, does not demand any further concession than an acknowledgement of this conditional reality of the world because his aim is to establish

Brahman as the sole, unconditional reality.¹

Disregarding Samkaracarya's clear lead in this matter, neo-Vedantins have relied heavily on the second aphorism of the *Vedānta-Sūtras* and as we saw with Bhattacharya on such passages in the Upanishads, which speak of Brahman as being the material cause of the world.² Kokilashvar Bhattacharya has repeatedly pointed out that since Brahman is real, the world is also real. It is only 'unreal' to the extent that we think it to be self-sufficient and not deriving from Brahman. There is progressive development in the world and this is still in the process of being fulfilled. The Divine purpose is working itself out in creation, sustaining it till the time it will reabsorb it in itself.

It may be said here that there could be no clearer example of the entry of time as history in Indian thought other than this realistic interpretation of Samkaracarya's Vedanta as a philosophy which propounds creation. The question must arise as to the necessity or legitimacy of this realistic interpretation. In other words, We have to see why Samkaracarya did not construe the 2nd aphorism along the lines of a causal argument.

The 2nd aphorism³ states that Brahman is cause of the world. It, therefore, seems to endorse a theory of 'creation in time' but an expansion of its meaning brings out the basic tenet of Vedanta which is to affirm not only the reality of Brahman, but also Brahman as the One Reality.

Samkaracarya points out that the Vedanta aphorisms are not to be treated as the premises of an argument, but that they are like the co-ordinating thread which strings

1. *Prayojanam cāśya brahma vidyāyā avidyānivṛttistata atyantikah samsārābhavaḥ*. Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. 2.1.1.

2. Chh. 6.1.4. Br. 1.1.7.

3. *Janmādyasya Yataḥ*, V. S. I.I.2. (Brahman is that) from which the origin, etc., (i.e., the origin, subsistence, and dissolution) of this (world proceed.)

different blooms together into a garland of flowers.¹ The flowers are the Texts and by tradition the Śruti Text for the 2nd (*janmādi*) aphorism is stated to be from the Taittiriya Upanishad, 3.1.

Seek to know that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge, That is Brahman.²

Brahman, then is that from which the world proceeds, in which it lives, by which it is sustained, into which it dissolves. By gathering to-gether the different aspects of the coming into being of the world, the Text is understood to have stated ultimacy of Brahman; in saying Brahman is the material as well as the efficient cause of the world, all dualities are in effect denied. The world cannot be said to have an independent material existence or it cannot be said to have been brought into existence by a creator. The causality that seems imputed to Brahman, therefore, is of the nature of an appearance only. It seems as if the world proceeds from Brahman. This interpretation is borne out by the usage of present participles in the Text : take birth (*jāyante*), live (*jīvanti*), move (*prayānti*) and merge (*abhisamviśanti*). The crucial point to be taken cognisance of in the passage is, therefore, the absence of a positivistic separation of the 'cause' of creation from the activity of creation. This inseparability of the world from Brahman, thus expounded in the Text by means of these concepts of continuity, namely, coming into existence living in it, finding sustenance from it and going back to it in dissolution, is confirmed by the concluding phrases : "enquire into that;

1. *Vedaṭṭavākyakusumgrathanārthatvātsūtrāṇam.* (V. S. bh. 1.1.2)
2. *yato vā imāṇi bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti yatra yānti abhisamviśanti tad vijijñāsasva; tad brahma.* (Tait. 3. 1.)

that is Brahman" (*tad vijijñāśasva; tad brahma*).¹

The term 'enquiry' pertains to that which is close at hand, as distinguished from the injunction to seek, or to meditate upon, or even to aspire after realization. Enquiry leads to the removal of the veil which prevents discovery. In other words *Vijijñāśasva* is to be construed to mean '*ātmanubhedena vijñāhi iti vijijñāśasva*', that is, 'know Brahman to be not other than the Self,' or 'know Brahman to be the Self itself.'

In order to demonstrate further that no causal arguments are being resorted to here, the reference to the Text from the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* is concluded by citing the passage describing the discovery of the nature of Brahman: "He knew Bliss as Brahman; for from Bliss, indeed, all these beings originate; having been born, they are sustained by Bliss; they move towards and merge in Bliss". (Tait. 3. 6.)

According to the tradition of Samkaracarya's exposition of these passages, Brahman, therefore, may be described firstly as if, it is the material and efficient cause of the world. This description is to be subjected to enquiry because it cannot be a final description since these categories belong naturally with the world rather than with Brahman. Brahman being the One and Only Reality, is, as if the material and efficient cause of the world; in reality it is of the nature of Bliss and only as such should be discovered in order to know its identity with the Self. Both the *sūtra* and the Text from the Upanishad are suggestive of Brahman, the first is in the nature of a quality which appears to belong to it, and the latter as indicative of the very nature of Brahman. There is not the semblance of duality here.

If Sam karacarya had in principle allowed for the existence of any reality other than Brahman, then he would not stand

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1. This interpretation is based mainly upon *The Discourses on Brahma Sūtra* by Swami Akhanadananda Saraswati; (Bombay : Satsahitya prakashan Trust, 1976), Vol. II (in Hindi), pp. 203-327.

in opposition to philosophies professing categories of dependent realities such as *Viśiṣṭādvaita* or the Madhva system of *Vedānta*. The neo-Vedantins, however, seek to find in Samkaracarya a reversal of his own position by adducing a real status to the world. Samkaracarya did not aim at destroying the world which exactly is the sphere of *māyā*. One may, and is most likely to continue to dwell in the realm of *māyā* for all time to come. The 'non-reality' or 'falsity' that he talks about pertains to the semblances of reality which are actualities for us. Falsity resides in experiencing many when there is one Reality only; in experiencing matter where no material principle obtains; in ascribing transience to the Eternal; in missing the Unity behind the fragmentations and in being unaware of the Self hidden by the not-Self. The truth is that *māyā* is not only illusion but it is "the cosmic condition", which makes illusion appear as inescapable reality.¹

We have seen that Indian scholars made sustained efforts at giving rationalistic and realistic interpretations to the Vedānta philosophy. The question which is indispensable here, is whether these points of view uncovered such meanings as were hidden in the philosophy or did they move away from the main sense of its inspiration? With A. C. Mukerji, it may be recalled, the bringing together of Kant and the Vedānta seemed not to have enhanced the significance of either. The realistic interpretation of Bhattacharya, on the other hand, is a different proposition because it tends by its exaggeration of the *de facto* reality of the world in Samkaracarya, to distort the total vision or picture of Vedānta. The constructions that he has put on some of the texts are farfetched and cannot, indeed, be justified in the light of the well-known intention of the entire body of

1. J. G. Arapura, "*Māyā and the Discourse about Brahman*", *The Problem of Two Truths in Buddhism and Vedānta*, ed. Mervyn Sprung (Boston U. S. A. : Reidel publishing Company, 1973), pp. 109-121.

literature on this point. The 'nonreality' of the world obtains nowhere else in the corpus of Vedanta literature but in the *Vedānta* of Samkaracarya. The originality of the concept of *mithyā* in Samkaracarya's formulation of *Advaita Vedānta* is in contradistinction to rival interpretations of Vedanta that preceded and succeeded him in the history of Vedanta tradition as such. It is, of course, well-known that Samkaracarya himself was not uninfluenced in arriving at the conceptualisation, as for example by Gaudapada, and *Mahāyāna* Schools of Buddhism, though he freely reconstructs it as the supreme implication of the Upanishadic understanding of Reality as 'non-dual'. To say to the contrary is not to state Samkaracarya's point of view but one's own, regarding the classical Advaita philosophy.

We are now in a position to assess the merits of neo-Vedantic contributions to Advaita philosophy in general. Two points seem to emerge in this context, which draw our attention to their importance. Firstly, in the quest for rehabilitating Vedanta, as it were, its main thesis of renunciation of the involvements of the I-consciousness is forgotten completely; secondly, and arising out of the first point, we see that the quest for Self-realization also has lost its primary place from within the scheme of things. The Upanishadic texts teach how to appropriate bliss by renouncing activity of the world. The contemporary attempts at arriving at what is living and dynamic in the tradition seem nothing but a reversal of the original position. In the next chapters, the factors of this process of reversal will be stated so that we may examine the long road which has been traversed by Indian scholars in their attempts to hold together Vedanta and the forces of Westernization. The philosophies of A. C. Mukerji and Kokilesvar Bhattacharya can be regarded as two pointers towards the general trend of neo-Vedanta.

Chapter Nine

The Lack of Soteriological Awareness in Neo-Vedanta

As stated by A. C. Mukerji, neo-Vedanta indicates that class of academic writing which sought to interpret Samkaracarya's thought in the language of Western philosophy.¹ This body of literature, as we have seen in the last few chapters, arose out of the need of the times. One author wrote :

The main battle which the Vedanta had to fight was against the forces released by the secular English education sponsored by "orthodox" Hindus.²

In this connection the letter written by Raja Rammohun Roy, to Lord Amherst in 1823, protesting against the decision to set up the Sanskrit College, in Calcutta, is very pertinent.

If it had been intended to keep the British nation in ignorance of real knowledge, the Baconian Philosophy would not have been allowed to displace the system of the Schoolman, which was the best calculated to perpetuate ignorance. In the same manner the Sanskrit System of education would be the best calculated to keep this country in darkness, if such had been the policy of the British legislature. But as the improvement of the

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1. See above p. 83.
 2. Niranjan Dhar, *Vedānta and the Bengal Renaissance* (Calcutta : Minerva Associates, 1977), p. 169.

native population is the object of the Government, it will consequently promote a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy, with other useful sciences...¹

It is clear that the scholars of early nineteenth century wanted to enter the stream of Western education quickly and they also felt called upon to defend and justify their ancient philosophical heritage. What is not so clear is the fact that a century of such preoccupation shows no signs of yielding place to any other form of philosophic writing. Although dearth of creative writing is sometimes noted in India, by far the most usual form of research is still grounded in apologetics as worthwhile academic work.²

1. S. D. Collet, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, eds. D. K. Biswas and P. C. Ganguly, (Calcutta, 1962), Appendix II, pp. 457-458.
2. The following two books have been written more than 50 years apart but they refute almost the same charges : V. J. Kirtikar, in his *Studies in Vedanta* (Bombay, 1924), answers the following criticisms against Vedanta : that it is revolting to common sense, and blasphemous; that it assumes the self; that it is pantheistic; that it does violence to Christian ethics; that it is mystic and quietistic etc. R. G. Garg (*Upanishadic Challenge to Science*, Delhi : 1978), pp. 241-280, covers almost the same ground in his eight-fold classification of the charges :
 - (a) pessimism (Urquhart : *Upanishads and Life*, Calcutta 1916, pp. 69-70).
 - (b) abstractionism (A. E. Gough, *Philosophy of the Upanishads*, London, 1882, p. 268, which Hegel called a "region of unbridled madness").
 - (c) Blasphemy (John Caird : *An Introduction to Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 74-75).

This phenomenon successfully hides the ground on which this particular type of literature takes its stand. In order to discover the reason for this continuing trend in defensive writing we may take up with profit the study of contemporary neo-Vedanta as a whole as background for the two typical points of view we considered in two previous chapters.

A very pertinent question may be raised here as to why should neo-Vedanta choose to situate itself within the framework of apologetics? Indian philosophy, has for long, developed on the lines of critical appraisals and clarifications. All systems of Indian philosophy are required to answer penetrating questionings raised from within as well as outside the tradition. Theories are, as is well known, propounded with a view to meeting the possible objections which may be raised against what is being stated. Such being the case, the conditions which precludes a continuation of this tradition of dialogical exegeses acquire some importance in the understanding of contemporary Indian philosophy.

The first point which strikes one very forcibly is that the Indian scholars did not distinguish between refutation and rejection of the very ground on which controversy can thrive. Vedanta in the twentieth century did not have to

(d) fictitiousness of the Individual Soul (Hertel's *Introduction to Kenopanishad*, Schweitzer *Indian Thought*, London, 1956, p. 47).

(e) Pantheism (Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom*, 1963, p. 38). A. S. Pringle-Pattison, *The Idea of God*, p. 219).

(f) a-Moralism (Farquhar Hibbert Journal, Oct. 1921, p. 24, Upton, Hibbert Lectures for 1893 pp. 241-42).

(g) asceticism, escapism, inactivism (Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. 12, p. 548).

(h) mysticism (Urquhart, *Indian Thought*, p. 43).

THE LACK OF STERIOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN NEO-VEDANTA 143

contend with refutations, regarding the nature of ultimate truth, as previously from the Buddhistic or dualistic points of view; or meet the challenge of searching questions from within the system, or the charge of doctrinal radicality from the orthodox system of *pūrva-mīmāṃsā*.¹ It had to contend only against an external critique which came from the vantage point of a superior developed culture or so they were told. The Indian scholars seem to have accepted the judgment that Indian philosophy was suffering from arrested "growth" and dynamism, whereas the West had progressed beyond to an age of enlightenment. That the West is superior in all aspects of human life is a conviction we meet with pulsating through the writings of the early neo-Vedantins. The language of constant approximation of ideas to Western concepts, leaves one in no doubt of the tacit acceptance of its criteria as ultimate. That the Western world had forged ahead because of their dynamic religion and India had been left behind because of its non-worldly orientation was accepted by those who were educated by Western scholars. A genuine dissatisfaction with their own tradition is apparent in the chain reaction set off by the introduction of the Western mode of intellectual appraisal of all past heritages. The 'educated' could find no answers from within at this time because the historical, philological and psychological methodologies applied to the body of textual literature had found the guardians of this lore almost totally at a loss. The Pundits learned in Sanskrit could do no better than take up a fundamentalist position which further alienated those who wished to forge ahead. The air of a rational emancipation from the trammels of dogma therefore, was all the more pleasing to Indian scholars at this time.² Unless due

1. All Histories of Indian Philosophy have documented the arguments and counter-arguments between various schools of thought down the centuries.
2. "By the beginning of the nineteenth century the works of Voltaire, Hume, Locke, Tom Paine etc. began to be

notice is taken of this historical background, one would fail to appreciate the importance of the overthrow (in effect) of the traditional mode of exegeses at this time and its replacement by Westernized criteria of hermeneutics.

From the perspective of the last quarter of the twentieth century, it becomes possible to delineate the almost imperceptible pathways of this transition. The body of literature under consideration, however seems to lend itself naturally to a four-fold scheme by which it sought to span the bridge between India's ancient heritage and Western education. A convenient way of understanding this movement of thought, if it may be called that, therefore, could be by following the ideas on rationality and morality. These may be considered as direct responses to the challenge of the West. The question of rationality belongs with the status of philosophy as being independent of religion; and morality, with the status of the empirical reality of the world.

A. The new Role of Reason in Indian Philosophy

Indian thought, over the centuries had built up a careful distinction between the rational and that which seems 'irrational' but may be presented as reasonable. This distinction is necessary, irreplaceable and of supreme importance if one were to seek to understand the message of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads address themselves not to the rational principle in man but toward his power of appreciation of that which may be admitted as cogent, reasonable, worthy of further investigation etc. Admittedly it is man who must seek

imported to Calcutta. Advertisements of these books appeared in the *Calcutta Gazette*, *Post*, *Calcutta Chronicle* and other magazines. Of these, the most popular were Tom Paine's *Age of Reason and Rights of Man*.

Nemai Sadhan Bose : *The Indian Awakening and Bengal* (Calcutta : Firma K.K. Mukhopadhyaya, 1969) . p. 65.

THE LACK OF SOTERIOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN NEO-VEDANTA 145

self-realization but how is he to be brought to the awareness of the desirability of this goal of human life? Man knows only the world in which he lives and the mode of this knowing is inescapably rational. To whatever limit this knowing may be pushed it will unavoidably carry the world along with it.

The Upanishads teach that it is possible to put a wedge in this mould of rationality not from outside but by an inwardisation of the same faculties which give the world to us.¹

The Upanishads are neither substitutes for rational thought, nor are they a contrast to it. Their authority lies in engendering conviction before any form of reference can be applied. This authority is a hidden authority because it may speak only to an openness for it.

It may be said, in other words, that the Vedanta, without its function as soteriology, must lose much of its relevance for the inquirer. The need felt for shrouding soteriology in order to answer an epistemological question inverts the order of priorities and distorts the meanings of epistemology and of the quest for Freedom as autonomous issues. At any rate the new role of reason created in response to such needs, by the Indian scholars at this time did not yield any results which could be said to have deepened our understanding of Vedanta. Even if it can be said that a rationalist like A. C. Mukerji did no great violence to Vedantic thought in isolating its epistemology from its

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1. The *Kathopanishad* (I. 3. 2-10) asks one to imagine the body to be a chariot driven by the intellect as its charioteer, the mind as reins and the senses as so many powerful steeds. The Master (the Self or *atman*) sits quietly watching the charioteer driving skillfully and purposefully, or wildly and erratically as the case may be. He could be seen if the charioteer were to turn around, otherwise the driver may continue to feel that it is he who is the Master.

mokṣa-oriented thought, the point of the whole enterprise remains open to question because, on the one hand Vedānta does not gain anything by the idealistic epistemology and on the other, Western Idealism cannot appropriate the Witness-Consciousness (*śakṣi-caitanya*) without radicalizing itself out of recognition.

The significance of the Vedantic intuition depends on the circularity of the Revelation-reason-experience (*śruti-yukti-anubhava*) scheme; Kant's metaphysics could not impart to it a scientific grounding without also engendering the possibility of the superfluity of the religious quest. It did not lie within the power of Indian scholars at this time to gauge the devastating influence of the critical philosophy as heralding the era of secular thought. Therefore the attempt at placing the religious category of intuition within the rubric of metaphysical arguments has, one may say, a quality of the tragic about it.

B. The Reality of the World and the Place of Ethics in Vedānta

The shift in perspective toward Westernization becomes more pronounced with the Indian defense calculated to establish the reality of the world from within the philosophy of Vedānta itself. They were moved to criticise the concept of *māyā* as unrealistic and opposed to a useful way of life in the world. Thus the principle of negation was interpreted by neo-Vedantins as delimiting the value of the world for human beings. It can be seen easily that here a tacit appropriation of the ultimate desirability of the progress-oriented ethos of the West took place. To think that moral values are at stake in Vedānta and must need be grounded in the 'reality' of the world to ensure the supreme importance of ethical behaviour is to agree that the discriminatory 'cancellation' is a denial of the world's actual existence for man.¹ It is not only true but a

1. It is interesting to note that this mistake is not made

THE LACK OF SOTERIOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN NEO-VEDANTA 147

truism to state that man and the world belong together. Human existence is obviously and necessarily in and of the world and nothing is gained by trivializing it. Samkaracarya was too astute a philosopher to have attempted any such absurdity. In fact he repeatedly disengages himself from entering into discourses on the world and man's engagements therein, on the plea that such matters fall under the scope of the literature pertaining to good conduct and so are not under dispute at all. According to Samkaracarya the *Dharma Śāstra* and the *Mīmamsa Sūtra* should be consulted in these matters.

Māyā as the principle which veils Brahman, the real, and projects in lieu of it the world as reality would be superfluous to any system which accepts the given world as ultimate i. e. ontologically real. In Vedānta the world is not diffused of its importance as the only known sphere of human activity but in its fullness it is regarded as a veil to be penetrated. *Māyā* in fact symbolizes this very demand on the part of the world to be considered the only reality for man. *Samsāra* (the world) remains very much as it is until it is cancelled as the veil and discovery of Brahman takes place.¹ A man who feels fear on perceiving a 'snake' in his path, can be rid of it only on *perceiving* the rope and in no other way; there is, therefore, no need to emphasize the world of praxis in Vedānta. This is exactly the human condition to which it is addressing itself.

It is therefore, not clear, what the realists would like to achieve by bringing into focus the reality of the world, which in a way, is the premise on which Vedānta bases its concept of *māyā*. Ethical questions, therefore, fall outside the scope of Vedānta, since it is not calling into question a

by Paul Deussen, who wrote: 'And so the Vedānta, in its pure and unfalsified form, is the strongest support for pure morality'. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (New Delhi : 1976), p. 65.

1. na tu samsaradasayam badhah : (Br. Up. Bh. IV. 5-15).

life of obedience to moral laws in the world.

Samkaracarya, beyond affirming totally the obligatoriness of enjoined duties on man by the scriptures, does not enter into questions of ethical import as such.¹ Wherever such discussions are demanded by the nature of the Textual matter, he follows the lead of the accepted code of moral behaviour as can be seen from the various precepts he quotes from the Smritis and the traditional illustrations that he uses. The authority of the different manuals of the good life are endorsed and used by him in his discourses on the Vedanta. Since he is speaking specifically to men who are engaged in worldly activities, he does not need to enter into disputes regarding the legitimacy or cogency of their behaviour. The world comes with its own demands for involvements for human beings; it cannot be denied or refused attention. Samkaracarya addresses himself to the question of the possibility of cancellation of this sphere of engagement in its entirety, that is, the ego-consciousness as well as the world it engages in, both, according to Vedanta, belonging to the sphere to the not-self.

Such being the case, the rationalistic questions regarding the priority of the subject as knower, of realistic problems regarding the status of the world being the real region where men may participate in Divine purpose and so on, become slightly out of focus because these matters are not being contested here. The soteriology being expounded by Samkaracarya is grounded in the central theme of the Upanishads which is to indicate the non-dual nature of Ultimate Reality. His aim is to make the promise of Supreme Joy² contained in the Texts, a question of palpable significance for men living an ordinary everyday life in the world.

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1. '...Nothing enjoined by the scripture can be unworthy of performance' *Samkarabhāṣya* on *Iśopaniṣad* 8.
 2. *brahmavit āpnoti param*, Tait. Up. II. 1.

THE LACK OF SOCIOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN NEO VEDANTA 149

The neo-Vedantins did not choose to stay with an evaluation of human life which gives it importance only to the extent that in man alone, may burgeon an yearning for enquiring into the nature of Ultimate Reality. In the sphere of ethical concerns, we come across the greatest step in veering round to the assimilation of Western influences. The individual had gained importance in the West in the nineteenth century. The status of man in the world, his duties toward social institutions, the legitimacy of his personal experiences, were topics of debate in Western thought. Although the question of salvation remained with religion, Christian values and virtues so permeated life in the West that they found expression in philosophical systems as ethical questions. One of the primary question for Western philosophy continues to be, "How to be a good man in an increasingly man-made world?"

In the Indian context ethical questions were brought to the central position in debates because the good way of life was not a matter of choice but always a matter of upholding, by way of appropriation, the eternal laws of the *dharma*. Ethical conduct is one of conformity to *Dharma*, exhorting man to understand himself less in terms of his role as a self-defining subject but more as exemplifying in his behaviour, as an integral part of an ordered nature, that which is 'good' or just. Justice already obtains in the world autonomously (so to speak) and impersonally. It is not left to man's will to impart it. To recover it from the obscuring effects of the ego-motives of the human individual is the function of ethical life which avowedly aims at 'purifying' the mind, so that it, truly comes to self-presence in relation to the cosmic order.

The experience of alienation from nature or man's own philosophic heritage gives real edge to the 'ethical' question of modern man. In antiquity there was no such experience and consequently there is no posing of the modern man's questions, like 'what can I know, what can I do, or what may I hope for'. When neo-Vedantins sought, uncritically, to raise

and answer those very questions *vis-a-vis* Vedanta they were in effect doing little more than aligning themselves along the thought-processes of the moderns and had consequently, nothing to add about Vedanta itself. Contemporary Indian philosophy, therefore, has nothing significant to contribute to what it would imitate or parallel.

The unique nature of the philosophy enunciated by Samkaracarya lies in his denying efficacy metaphysically to action as means of the highest attainment. One of the longest expositions regarding this is given in the first section of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. It is to be noted that regarding this very section Bhattacharya in his commentary on this *Upaniṣad* remarks :

Since this chapter is unsuited to the requirements of the present age, it is omitted here.¹

This is a clear example of choosing sections from Samkaracarya's works according to the requirement of the interpreter, instead of taking the entirety of it under consideration. We are obliged to acknowledge the fact that, that morality is world-oriented was learnt from the modernized West rather than from Vedanta. To identify good behaviour with greater involvements along the same line that one already is involved in, in his natural life cannot be sustained by the Vedanta philosophy which identifies good with the attainment of Ultimate Joy in *mokṣa*. It is a moot question whether a quality of detachment may not be found to be a sounder base for moral behaviour rather than a thirst for active reorganization of the world, especially when the future aimed at brings with it greater ills than could be imagined. This question, however, does not belong with Vedanta, which without denying the peremptory nature of the world seeks to isolate the dynamics of it. This perspective is brought out clearly by one of the eminent Pundits in

1. *Upaniṣader Upadeśa*, Vol. III (in Bengali) (Calcutta, 1910), P. 202.

THE LACK OF SOTERIOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN NEO-VEDANTA 151

Vedanta of this century, who writes in Bengali :

I was asked by Rameshchandra Mitra, 'Sir, tell me why was Samkaracarya exercised about establishing the Vedanta ? Of what possible use is it ? You will talk of *mokṣa* or things metaphysical. That is not my question. My question is, does it have any visible benefits to confer on us ?

To this question I replied as follows :

It must be said that it is of no benefit to those who seek to appear learned in it, or those who study it out of curiosity or seek entertainment from it; but for all those who engage in its study in order to follow its precepts are no doubt benefitted (as to their way of life in the world) ... Other ethical systems teach how society may be organized; but these moral lessons teach man how to live (not only in the society, but) in his own body and the world in which he finds himself and through which he sojourns.....¹

The world and morality must belong together; but if the world is not, then the behavioural pattern which is relevant to life in the world also ceases to be the focus of concern.

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1. Kalivara Vednatavagisa, *Samkaracarya and Sakyamuni* (in Bengali) (Calcutta, Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika Monograph, 1307, 1893), pp. 14-15.

Chapter Ten

Renunciation and Bliss

On examining the emerging patterns of neo-Vedanta as enunciated by scholars like K. Bhattacharya, A.C. Mukerji, and others, one is drawn to the conclusion that they were all concerned with bringing the world into primary focus for man and updating the ancient heritage in the light of this new understanding of human values. The question must be raised if Samkaracarya can be so translated without a number of stipulations safeguarding his position. This is not to deny the right of any philosopher to radicalize the position of Samkaracarya, but the present day interpretators render his thought without this hermeneutical awareness. They think that they are truly uncovering his original intention. It is interesting to note that with the exception of a few only, nearly all modern expositors refer to Samkaracarya's renderings of the Textual material as clinching the inner meaning of Vedanta. The important point is whether Samkaracarya can be approached apart from or aside of the centrality of the soteriological intentions that lie at the basis of his thinking. That he is purporting to expound Vedanta as *mokṣaśāstra* without the slightest equivocation cannot be seriously doubted by any reader of his works. This aspect of his thought, however, seems in complete abeyance in recent expositions of his philosophy obviously because modern man is not interested in the question of *mokṣa* even if it is stated to be of the nature of Bliss.

This omission is all the more remarkable because Samkaracarya himself, in his commentaries, is repeatedly questioned regarding his separation of worldly pursuits and

the state of renunciation he is advocating for those who would know Brahman. In one such passage the objection in effect is as follows :

Performance of duties, as well as, to aim at the knowledge of the Self are enjoined by the Scriptures. Why do you deny the former for those who seek the latter ?¹

Samkaracarya's answer consists in explaining that the different passages referred to are contradictory and therefore cannot be said to apply to the same situation, as opposing qualities cannot belong to the same object. Action in the world is only for those who are not yet seized with the quest for knowledge. For a seeker after Truth, all actions in the world are left behind. The division of the two regions is very subtle and tenuous. To highlight this factor Samkaracarya remarks, in a lighter vein :

Not that any question can be raised as to why a person, who was (once) enveloped in darkness, does not fall into a pit, swamp, or brambles after the dawn of light.²

Action, as a means of felicity in the world or beyond it, exercises a great hold on philosophical thinking. As against Samkaracarya, the second verse of the *Īsopaniṣad* is often cited by those who wish to emphasize the role of *karma* in Upanishadic thought, which is as follows :

By doing *karma*, indeed, should one wish to live here for a hundred years. For a man, such as you (who wants to live thus), there is no way other than this, whereby *karma* may not cling to you.

Samkaracarya in his commentary on the verse, accepts it as descriptive of the way of *karma* for those who are thus engaged in the world. He continues, saying that of the two paths of *karma* and of *renunciation*, the latter is

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1. *Śamkarabhāṣya*, Preface to *Aitareya Upaniṣad*.
 2. *Ibid*.

the more excellent, for, this leads to knowledge. He says, emphatically 'Do you not remember what was pointed out, that the anti-thesis between knowledge and *karma* is irremovable like a mountain?'¹

He is equally clear on the subject of *karma* in his commentary on the opening verse of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. 'Now' he says, 'is commenced the knowledge of Brahman with a view to eschewing the causes that lead to the performance of *karma*'. In other numerous similar passages he has emphasized the discontinuity between the way of *karma* and the way of knowledge. *Karma* in the world is productive of evils or merits as the case may be. The highest heaven may be achieved by *karma*, but it may not engender the Bliss of Brahman-knowledge (*brahma-jñāna*). Ultimate knowledge is not something to be brought into existence by any means, but it is to become of the nature of Bliss. The Enlightenment which is Bliss is simultaneous with the falling away of the sense of duality. This is how renunciation and Bliss is held together in Advaita philosophy.

Admittedly, it is a difficult point to grasp, for, we are used to living with thoughts to the contrary. Even Anandagiri, the most excellent of commentators on the writings of Samkaracarya fails at times to remain with his preceptor's uncompromising attitude toward renunciation. Anandagiri points out that renunciation cannot be a requirement because the Vedas mention the god Indra, the emperor Janaka and the woman Gargi as knowers of Brahman.²

Samkaracarya, however, should not be understood to have been refuted by this example of Janaka and other such *brahmavit* (knowers of Brahman) propounders of *Vidyā* (knowledge). The renunciation that he is talking about is a necessary and inevitable condition of knowledge but not sufficient reason for it. Renunciation does not

1. *Śamkarabhāṣya* on *Iśopaniṣad* 2.

2. Anandagiri's Gloss on *Mund. Up. Bh.* III. 2-4

bring about knowledge but rather the state of 'knowing' must be indicated by the relinquishing of the entire dimension of the 'as if'. In other words renunciation is the symbol (*linga*) of knowledge,¹ not its substance.

The separation of worldly activity from the state of enlightenment lies at the heart of Samkaracarya's exposition of the Upanishads; it is clear that this separation is not thus presented by the neo-Vedantins. The jettisoning of the main thesis of the Advaita lies in this shift in emphasis from the other-worldly stance to this worldly attitude effected by contemporary thinkers of the Vedanta philosophy. Some have gone to the extent of saying that Gaudapada and Samkaracarya are alien inroads in orthodox thinking, that they were influenced by Samkhya and Buddhism and introduced foreign elements in the stream of Upanishadic thought.²

S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri writes :

The observance of *Karma* need not be merely a preliminary discipline, as held by Samkaracarya and his strict adherents, disappearing with onset of knowledge, like clouds when the rainy season is over; that discipline, when perfected, may itself *be* the self-transcendence known as Brahman-realization; it may, in the alternative be a useful aid to knowledge...³

The fact is that Samkaracarya himself is quite aware of the enormity of the task he has set himself; this is made apparent by him in his inimitable style of expressing the gravest ideas in the mildest language :

At this point someone may say : 'If this be so, I am afraid of liberation, consisting in becoming the self of all (that is, losing my indi-

1. Mund. Up. Bh. III. 2-4

2. S. G. Mudgal, *Advaita of Sankara : A Reappraisal* (Motilal Banarasidass, 1975), p. 61

3. *Samkaracarya*, Madras, C.A. Natesan & Co., n.d. p. 73.

viduality). *Let my worldly existence itself continue.....*' (The answer is) Do not entertain such a fear, for the enjoyment of all the desirable things falls within the range of relative existence.....(For the man of knowledge) there exists nothing separately of which he can be afraid because being in possession of all he is totally happy). Hence there is nothing to be afraid of in liberation.¹

Samkaracarya, therefore, must be understood to have set himself the difficult task of explaining to his audience, why they should look beyond the world for that supreme happiness which is only foreshadowed in the pleasures of everyday life; why this semblance of that joy must be given up for the enjoyment of its real plenitude.

Samkaracarya's task is difficult because he has to take into account the fact that the realisation of the limitations of the human condition itself, does not lead to the transcendence of it. He, therefore, does not speak to the element of tragedy in man's life as something to be overcome. It would be a gross trivialization to interpret Samkaracarya to mean that he is merely trying to show up the shortcomings of a worldly existence. He is rather trying to focus on a metaphysical predicament which precisely is not grasped as a predicament of all. In answer to the question, in what does the pre-eminence of man reside, he says :

In his competence for *karma* and knowledge. For man alone is qualified for rites and duties as also for knowledge, by virtue of his ability, craving (for results), and non-indifference (to results).....The intention here (the Text), is to make that very human being enter into the innermost Brahman through knowledge.²

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1. *Sankarabhāṣya* on Tait. III. 10, 5-6 (emphasis added)
 2. *Sankarabhāṣya* on Tait. II. 1.1.

The man of work is pre-eminently qualified for engaging in the enquiry about Brahman...but not, and this is the crucial point, not through or by the mode of greater activity in the world. Man is always faced with a choice. His candidature for enjoyment of the world is the natural corollary to his existence in the world; his way is also open toward the acquiring of knowledge by *mokṣa-śāstra*. The most important point, therefore, for Vedānta is to render help toward the awakening of the desire to know Brahman; or in other words to answer the question, 'Why should I know Brahman?'

S. Radhakrishnan's forceful enunciation of the philosophy of Samkaracarya, attracted to it not only educated Indians but also drew the attention of the world to it. Yet to understand Samkaracarya's philosophy as the grounding for a dynamic outlook toward life or alternately, a denial of the world, is to disregard his finely worked out arguments for the loosening of the ties of the world. He has nowhere professed his competence to speak toward the problems of the world of praxis. Vedānta, therefore, does not primarily concern itself with adding more power to the mode of living in the world. According to Samkaracarya, the dynamics of activity itself work toward greater usefulness and competence in the world. It is necessary, on the other hand, to open up the possibility of the desire to know Brahman. The sustenance of this 'unatural' movement in thought, is the region of competence for the Vedantist.

It is to be seen, however, that the neo-Vedantists have presented the Advaita philosophy, not as an exclusive perspective on the human condition but as an universal spiritualism for the modern world. At the beginning of the century the confrontation with Christian Theology, awoke a pride in the non-dogmatic character of their own philosophy which could be expounded to all men of understanding without demanding that they give up their own religion in order to understand the message of the Upanishads. The final form that neo-Vedānta has assumed in our own

time is, therefore, that of an universal spiritualism; it is believed that Vedanta, instead of being in conflict with modern times, provides the only clue toward a healthy balancing of the forces of secularism and a sense of the religious.

It is true that the latter half of twentieth century has seen a flowering of Eastern-centrism in the West which is unprecedented.¹ It is said that we are today entering an era of newfound understanding between the East and the West, that in the region of perennial philosophy² the horizons of East and West have met and become one. A new type of literature is coming into existence which heralds the coming of the integral consciousness which will not know the confines of regional boundaries. One author writes :

It is to be assumed that Asia and the West will mutually assist one another in order to help awaken this new consciousness.³

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1. "It appears that today a universal connection is being initiated in the spiritual sense in a new confrontation of the East and the West, such as never perhaps occurred in history." E. Frauwallner, *History of Indian Philosophy* (Delhi : Motilal Banarsidass, 1973), p. XXXIX.
 2. Aldous Huxley writes : "Philosophia perennis — the phrase was coined by Leibnitz but the thing—the metaphysic that recognises a divine Reality substantial to the world of things and lives and minds, the psychology that finds in the soul something similar to or even identical with divine Reality: the ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the immanent and transcendent Ground of all being —the thing is immemorial and universal." *The Perennial Philosophy* (London : Chatto and Windus), p. 1.
 3. P. J. Saher, *Eastern Wisdom and Western Thought, The Psycho-Cybernetics of Comparative Ideas in Religion and Philosophy* (London Allen & Unwin, 1969), p. 12.

The question may be raised if this is what was aimed at when Indian scholars eagerly tried to participate in the thought-life of the West. It is quite conceivable that they were on the other hand rather appalled to see the transformation of the Indian concept of Monism into the universalism of a perennial philosophy. It is to be noted that it remains more of an Western enterprise than Indian. Spiritualism is the philosophy of a secular society and India if alive to the spirit of its heritage can hardly acclaim it as a description of its genius. The swelling tide of the East-West confluence on the level of spiritual consciousness follows, therefore, a course of its own without adding to the metaphysical thinking necessary for the understanding of the Indian tradition.

It is also true that many East-West conferences are taking place where it is hoped that a new awakening will take place.¹ The acceptance of the philosophy of Vedanta at the level of World Conference however, seems a very remote possibility when it is not accepted as such by those who apparently advocate its thoughts. To say this, is not at all, to deny the universal character of Vedanta. On the contrary; Samkaracarya is without doubt speaking to all who would care to engage in a dialogue with him. Painstakingly, he takes his interlocuters along the path of renunciation which they are as wary of travelling as any modern man. The hold of the world on man is not less gripping in our time than in

1. The proceedings of the four conferences held in 1939, 1949, 1959 and 1964 have been published as follows :

- (a) *Philosophy—East and West* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1944).
- (b) *Essays in East-West Philosophy* (Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 1951).
- (c) *Philosophy and Culture—East and West* (Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 1962).
- (d) *Status of the Individual : East and West* (Honolulu : University of Hawaii Press, 1967).

Samkaracarya's. The objections to his teaching are numerous and cover, in effect, the same ground that any modern critics may level against him. To loosen the familiar ties with which we are bound to the world is neither easy nor a natural process; moreover it does not seem to lead to any end which could appear as immediately meaningful and worth while.

So, from whence comes the appeal of Advaita and who is affected by it? It may be said, in answer, that the inspiration is derived from the vision of Bliss Supreme as the goal of human life, seen by the Upanishadic seers; this vision is relevant to those only who are seeking not the fragmentation of bliss in the world but the totality of it in *mokṣa* (Liberation).

It is clearly to be seen in the last seventy years or so, few attempts have been made to describe Brahman as *ānanda* as central to the teachings of the Upanishads¹. This is not surprising because in this context of *ānanda* must be stated the ideal of renunciation. The contemporary writers who seek to interpret Vedanta for the modern world, have emphasized *sat* (reality) and *cit* (consciousness) but not *ānanda* (bliss) and have thus taken apart the integrated unity of Brahman as *Saccidananda*. We may even say that a veiling of Brahman as *ānanda*, is exemplified in the writings of neo-Vedantins. Instead of the plenitude of bliss promised by the Upanishads, they chose to stay with the infinitesimal part of this Bliss which sustains the entire world :

...this is its (Brahman's) Supreme bliss. On a particle of this very bliss other beings live.²

The exclusivity demanded, regarding the teaching as well as the willingness to hearken to the teaching of Advaita is not incompatible with its universality. The enquiry into Brahman knowledge could be the concern of anyone, anywhere and

1. N. A. Nikam's *The Delight of Being*, is one the recent attempts addressed to this task.

2. Br. Up. IV. 111.32.

at any time. Thus Samkaracarya's philosophy may be termed, universal and also relevant to all modes of living, ancient or modern; yet it must be emphasized that he is uniformly and exclusively addressing himself toward the unravelling of 'that knot of the heart'¹ which remains so unequivocally obdurate to all worldly measures. As a matter of fact the universality which obtains in Samkaracarya's philosophy is at a deeper level than is maintained by his interpreters.

In following the paths which neo-Vedanta followed, one can conclude without being unduly harsh that it has not opened up any new avenues of understanding with regard to our heritage, since the modes of interpretations employed relate it exclusively to the demands of Westernization. The Indian scholars, considered 'the age of man' to be a desirable end to be endorsed for their own country. The problem delineated in the beginning of this work pertained to the emergence of neo-Vedanta as a contemporary way of understanding the tradition of Upanishadic thought. It is understandable that at the first encounter of disparate cultures a veiling of crucial issues would take place. The veiling however persists in the implied new self-understanding of Vedantic thought as entailing a discontinuity with tradition.

The discontinuity with tradition perhaps lies not so much in extolling the values of humanity but in thinking that these lay at variance with Vedantic thought. Hence was felt the need for the construction of neo-Vedanta. The exclusive region of Vedanta however stands in no conflict with worldly concerns, and it was a tragic mistake to think that this was so. The phrase used by Gilbert Murray in a different context, seems apt to the Indian situation. There was here 'a failure of nerve' on the part of thinkers to keep to the teaching of renunciation in the face of the rising tides of secularism. Neo-Vedanta, therefore, developed as.

1. *Mund.* II. 2.8.

a mode of compromise, where there was no need for such attempts. Moreover, as long as a complete break with tradition, remained outside the scope of existential experience all attempts at reconstituting the indigenous philosophy were bound to fail. It is therefore, not surprising that neo-vedanta did not succeed in taking roots in the soil of India.

The crux of the matter is that the unity of the Self and Brahman is revealed in and only in the Upanishads. If one wishes to be led toward the understanding of this teaching one must follow the guideline provided by of the tradition united in its concern to underscore the heart and essence of Upanishadic revelation. By this teaching a transformation of the very structure of man's being in the world was sought to be effected. The attempts at seeking to place it in a different setting bespeaking a different orientation of spirit cannot be considered a continuation of the tradition.

It is a very nice conceit on the part of man in our contemporary world, to think the world needs to be underscored as the region of human fulfilment. As a matter of fact the grip of the world was felt as strongly by man in the time of Samkaracarya as at any other time before or since; otherwise he would not have felt called upon to (as referred to above) reassure his pupils regarding liberation. So we see that there is no special line of demarcation for distinguishing between either an ancient or a contemporary desire which makes a man cry 'let the world be' (*astu saṁsāra eva*).

We who are inescapably Westernized, may engage in an academic pursuit of Vedantic knowledge only in the mode of what the ancients, called the logic of 'the lamp at the threshold' (*dehali-deepa-nyāya*). The lamp if placed at the threshold, illuminates the room as well as the courtyard; and as such leaves open the choice to '*astu saṁsāra eva*' (let the world be) or toward the unknown and therefore fearful path

to 'mokṣa' And this after all, is where all students of the Upanishads, have always stood and must always stand in the future as well.

The questions which are thematised in the Upanishads belong with the Textual statements presented for appropriation by enquiry and meditation. Without an inquiry there is no answer; in preserving this methodology the Upanishads have touched the innermost chord in all human hearts. In this alone perhaps can be found the secret of that universalism which is generally sought to be propagated at a different level altogether.

To grasp the meaning of Samkaracarya, one must see him as holding up the lamp which illuminates the threshold. He is addressing those who would venture out into the shadowy world which can be glimpsed from where they are but not known. The world including time, plays no important part here because the human condition is precisely this predicament of being in the world, where man finds himself, and where he may choose to be, but from whence he may also start on a quest which would transform his entire way of understanding the world.

According to the point of view taken up here, it is possible to construe tradition as being of uniform significance throughout the ages because it is based on a view of man which is not only that of the age of modernity. To the question whether we had the choice to stay clear of the forces of modernity, the answer would seem to be that it was both necessary and desirable to have 'thought' the tradition on its own terms.

The point of this Chapter could be stated differently: The epistemological and ethical framework of Western philosophy could have been studied and appreciated as a contrast to the traditional mode of thinking about the statements of the Upanishads. It is possible that this line of approach to the encounter would have resulted in a deepening of understanding of both systems of thought. As it is, the deeper hermeneutical dimension of the exegetical literature is almost

lost to the world of academics. It must be emphasized that the hermeneutical task before Samkaracarya was one of uncovering the one ultimate question which the Upanishads answer. By the very nature of the case it could not be of the nature of open ended questions which would depend upon experiences in the world for their resolution. In order to enter into the stream of Upanishadic tradition a task which exegesis intends to facilitate, we must bring ourselves to see the profound significance of the following question, or even to ask it.

I ask you, of that Being who is to be known only from the Upanishads, who definitely projects those (all) beings and withdraws them into Himself, and who is at the same time transcendent.¹

At the end of the critique of neo-Vedanta we must go back to the source material for all interpretative philosophies. The next four Chapters are devoted to the study of the *Taittirīya Upanishad* with a view to substantiating the critique. Although all Upanishads expound, in effect, the non-dual Brahman, the Tattirīya, especially and unquestionably discourses on the ideal of renunciation, holding it together with the concept of a plenitude of Bliss. The study of this Upanishad, in the light of Samkaracarya's commentary reveals the yawning 'chasm between the tradition and its modernised forms. The latter attempts, however, must be regarded as an important chapter in the history of Indian philosophy because it reflects the polarisation of values which was a living experience for the creators of neo-Vedanta.

1. *Sa yastān puruṣān niruhyā pratyuhyātyakrāmat, tam-tvānīṣadam puruṣam prcchāmi.* Br Up III. 9.26.

Chapter Eleven

The Ontology of Bliss

In the next four Chapters, we go back to one of the major sources of Vedanta philosophy, namely the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*. It is hoped that this very effort toward recovering an understanding of tradition in thought in terms of its own premisses may be viewed as a step one may take in the direction of loosening the stranglehold of modernity as an ideology. Regarding the Upanishads, N. A. Nikam, has written :

In the *Upanishads*, philosophy arises as a question and lives as a dialogue...There is no inquiry if there is no question. A dialogue arises not because a question is asked and is answered but because a question is questioned. And the dialogue is between one who "knows" and one who "inquires"...A teacher belongs to a galaxy, and falls in line with others who preceded him. But the line is not completed. The line is the *tradition* of teachers who guard the tradition that produces them... The *Upanishads* are a demonstration of the fact that man can bring about a revolution in his nature through dialogue. The *Upaniṣads* are, therefore, dialogues of the civilization of man.¹

The following rendering of the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* has been schematised into such topics as could be related easily

1. N. A. Nikam *Ten Principal Upanishads* (Bombay, 1974, pp. 1-5)

to what has already been stated in the earlier Chapters. Firstly, the Text is introduced and its contents are described; next, an account of disciplines propounded for the students is summarised with a view to bringing out the Upanishadic understanding of the nature of man to see what may be expected of him in and away from the world. Finally, the dimension of this transition is described: a transformation which is of the nature of a finding or realization only. The final Chapter concludes with the question of the desirability as well as the necessity for renunciation.

A. The Text :

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* is regarded by tradition as one of the major texts, containing not only the 'essential' definition of Brahman but also by implication what may be described as an analysis of the nature of man. It sets forth the mode of proceeding on the way to Brahman-knowledge and then culminates in describing the ecstasy of the aspirant who has realised Brahman. A unity of subject characterises this small Text which belongs to the *Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda*. It comprises of three chapters called *vallis* (entwining creepers) which are divided into twelve, nine and ten sections, respectively, called *anuvākas* (lessons). Thus the entire *Upaniṣad* contains thirty-one short passages only.¹

The *Taittirīya* has many claims toward distinction even amongst the major Upanishads. It is one of the few Upanishads which has merited the commentary of the famous Vedic annotator Sayanacarya (Sayana). Sayana had confined himself to the earlier three sections of the Vedas and had not proceeded to the fourth section which in general comprises of the Upanishads. The three chapters of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*

1. Some sections are further divided into verses, but different editions have different numbers for these verses. I have followed the numbering given in the Gita Press edition. In the *Anandashrama* edition, the second and third *vallis* are divided into *khandas* and not *anuvākas*. (*Sanskrit Granthāvali*, no. 12).

the *Śikṣā-vallī*, the *Ānanda-vallī* and the *Bhṛgu-vallī*, actually form the seventh, eighth and the ninth chapters of the *Āraṇyaka* (3rd section) of the *Kṛṣṇa-yajurveda*, and as such were treated by Sayana in his Vedic commentary.

According to Sayana, the first chapter of the *Taittirīya* can be called an *Upaniṣad* in its own right. His classification, therefore, is as follows : the *Śikṣā-vallī* is called *Sāmhiti-upaniṣad*; the *Ānanda-vallī* and the *Bhṛgu-vallī* are together called the *Varuṇi upaniṣad*. Sayana writes that the latter is more significant than the former, because it contains the main teaching of the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. The first chapter, called *Sāmhiti*, discoursing on rituals and other disciplines related to Vedic study, is also important as no student may hope to come to the central teaching without qualifying himself by the study of the first *vallī*.¹

The first *vallī* propounding the disciplines to be followed by students, has not been separated by any of the classical commentators from the main body of the Text.² It is so integral to the structure of the *Āraṇyaka* that Sayana actually has raised it to the status of an *Upaniṣad*. Its importance lies in creating the groundwork for the imparting of knowledge contained in the next two chapters. Without a study of the *Śikṣā-vallī*, the message of the *Ānanda* and *Bhṛgu vallī* could not be understood in any appreciable measure.

The naming of the Upanishads or their sections, in general, are done by reference to the Teacher (as for example, *Māṇḍūkya*, *Kaṭha*, *Kauṣītaki* and *Śvetāśvatara*) or even by the first word of the Text, (*Iśa*, *Kena*) or the

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1. *Tāsyāmadhikārasiddhaye sāmhityāḥ prathamany paṭhitavyatvāt.* Sayana, p. 4 (*Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, *prapāṭhaka* 7, *anuvāka* 1).

In this connection the modern attitude of considering it irrelevant to the issue becomes self-revealing as a departure from the traditional way of understanding the *Upaniṣad*. *Supra* p. 160.

name is merely descriptive (*Praśna*, *Chhāndogya*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, *Muṇḍaka*, *Āitereya* and *Kaivalya*). Of all the major Upanishads,¹ the *Taittirīya* alone has also a symbolic meaning given to its name. The legend perpetuated regarding its name states :

It is said that Saint Vaisampayana got annoyed with a prominent disciple of his, Yajnavalkya and the *guru* ordered the disciple to return all the knowledge so far taught to him. Yajnavalkya 'vomitted' the entire knowledge acquired, seeing which Vaisampayana ordered his other disciples to take the form of partridges (*Tittiri* birds) and consume the learnings.²

The *Taittirīya* comes to us, therefore, shrouded in the mystery of a mythical legend yet it foreshadows the main thrust of the Text in at least one respect. The great sage Yajnavalkya who is the knower of Brahman (*Brahmavit*), in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, here in the legend, on being debarred from this knowledge, goes away and by proper austerities and meditation again acquires the knowledge by his own efforts and the grace of the great god *Savita*.³ We see a repetition of this motif in Bhrigu's anxiety for knowledge, his efforts toward it and his final success in acquiring it, in the vicinity of the Teacher as it were, but not actually being 'taught' by him. The mystery of Brahman-knowledge,

1. Traditionally 13 *Upaniṣads* are considered major works in Vedānta; the eleven commented upon by Saṃkarācārya and two from which he has quoted in his writings. Out of the names given above, the *Kauṣītaki* and the *Kaivalya* do not have Saṃkarabhāṣya on them. The commentary on the *Śvetasvatara* is open to some doubt as to whether it was written by Saṃkarācārya.
2. Discourses on *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* by Swami Chinmaya (Madras : 1955), p. 71
3. *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, III. 5

therefore, cannot become a subject for discourse or a part of a teaching regimen; it is a 'seeing' for those who seek and who make supreme efforts toward it and the worth-whileness alone of such efforts may be learnt from the Teacher.

The most distinguishing feature of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* is its opening hymn which rather unexpectedly is taken from the *Rg Veda* (I. 90. 9). The *Taittirīya*, belonging to the *Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda*, should have been prefaced by the hymn: *Sah nau avatu*, etc.; instead this hymn is appended at the end of the hymn from the *Rg Veda*.¹ The hymn is:

May Mitra, Varuna, Aryaman, Indra,
Brihaspati and Vishnu of wide strides be
propitious to us and grant us welfare and
bliss. I salute Brahman in loving reverence.
O Vayu, I bow down to thee in adoration.
Thou verily art Brahman perceptible. I shall
declare: Thou art the right: Thou art the
true and the good. May that Universal Being
entitled Vayu preserve me. May He preserve
the teacher. Me, may Brahman protect; my

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1. In the *Muktikopaniṣad* is to be found the classification of the 108 *Upaniṣads* according to their opening peace chants. As far as the major Upanishads are concerned the list is as follows.

- (a) *Aitareya*, *Kauṣṭaki* beginning with '*Vahme manasi*,' etc., belonging to *Rgveda*;
- (b) *Iśa*, *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, beginning with '*pūrṇamadah*,' etc., belonging to *Sukla-yajurveda*;
- (c) *Kaṣha*, *Tittiri*, *Kaivalya*, *Śvetāśvatara*, beginning with '*Sahanavavatu*,' etc., belonging to *Kṛṣṇa yajur-veda*.
- (d) *Kena*, *Chhandogya*, beginning with '*apyayantu*,' etc., belonging to *Sāmaveda*;
- (e) *Praśna*, *Muṇḍaka*, *Māndūkya* beginning with '*bhadrām karṇebhih*,' etc., belonging to *Atharvaveda*.

teacher, may He protect. *Om, peace, Peace, Peace.*¹

With this opening verse of the Text we indeed come to the subject matter of the *Upaniṣad*, because again most unusually the peace chant itself forms the first lesson (*anuvāka*) of the first chapter (*vallī*). Samkaracarya's commentary on the chant marks it out as indicative of the subject of the *Upaniṣad*.

Sayana, in his *Bhāṣya* writes² that it is meet that the gods like Mitra, Varuna, etc., should be propitiated by man because by seeking to acquire Brahman-knowledge he is preparing to forsake the region of the influence of the gods. Just as responsible shepherds guard their flock against night marauders like tigers, etc., so do the gods seek to preserve human beings against the possibility of the transcendence of the human condition. Gods are sustained by human beings and therefore men are zealously guarded by their spiritual protectors. Thus, unless the gods become kind and remove such obstacles as may impede the progress of the scholar, he cannot hope to strike out for freedom. By this invocatory chant, therefore, the *Upaniṣad* indicates that the main thrust of the Text is toward imparting Brahman-knowledge alone, by which man is to proceed on a path unknown to and uncharted by worldly wisdom.

B. The Four-fold Scheme of Interpretative Analysis :

Following the classical mode of exegesis, Sayana brings the entire textual material under the four-fold scheme of interpretative analysis known as the *anubandha catusṭaya*. The contents of a book under consideration is sought to be understood with reference to these four questions, namely, (i) What is the subject of the work in question, (ii) how is the work proposing to deal with the subject or how is it

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1. *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, Invocation verse.
 2. Sayana, pp. 2-8

related to its subject, (iii) what can be the outcome of the work; and lastly, (iv) for whom is the work meant ?¹

Sayana's definition of subject is, 'the material which is not available anywhere else' (*ananyalabhyo viṣaya itihi viṣayasya lakṣaṇam*).² The uniqueness of the content of this Text according to him is indicated by the opening verse and hence its peculiar relevance in combining invocation with presaging the subject matter of the following sections.

To approach the question in a different way : all Upanishads propound the knowledge of the unity of the Self and Brahman, which is called Brahman-knowledge, or *brahmavidyā*. *Brahmavidyā* is that supreme knowledge, 'on knowing which everything else may be known.' The *Mundakopanishad* raises and answers this question. (*kasminnu bhagavo vijāte sarvaṁ idhaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavānti ?* Mund. I.1.3). This is the crucial question sought to be answered by all Upanishads. The Upanishads are discourses about that 'Person' who being the source of all, may not be known from any other source of knowledge than himself. It is stated in the Texts that this supreme knowledge may not be acquired through sense-experience, or by the mind by meditation, or speech by discourse.³

The Upanishads must, therefore, play a double role. The knowing of the scriptural knowledge is the necessary penultimate step toward qualifying oneself toward the acquiring of the transcendent (*parā vidyā*) illumination by which all else is lighted up. Any ground which gives rise to a knowledge of the good must also yield to a knowledge

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1. *Viṣayah kaḥ phalam kim kaḥ sambandhaḥ ko' dhikārayaḥ ityākāṁkṣānivṛtyartham catuṣṭayamudiryate.* Sayana, Introduction, p. 2.
 2. Sayana, Introduction, p. 2.
 3. The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind. We do not know (Brahman to be such and such), hence we are not aware of any method of teaching it. (Kena 1.3.)

of its absence as evil. Therefore, scriptural knowledge which brings about a sense of the duties to be performed in the world, the virtues to be inculcated, the obligations to be discharged the rights to be enjoyed, etc., must also indicate the way of this discursiveness toward the unity which being realised all fragmentations stand dissolved. To talk about this fulfilment and man's eligibility for it is the subject-matter for all Upanishads and especially so for the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*. In the *Taittirīya* is given the details of both aspect of Brahman-knowledge and this is indicated by the opening verse, which is, therefore, crucial in its import.

The question of subject-matter; namely Brahman-knowledge thus, must be understood to have been settled by the analysis of the opening verse itself. This is also the reason why the commentators have treated it as the first lesson of the first chapter of the Text. The peace-chant of the *Kṛiṣṇa-Yajurveda* which opens all other Texts is also given which confirms the interpretation that the verse from *Rgveda* is to be understood especially with reference to the gods who guard the affairs of earthly beings.

The second question regarding the fruit of the study of the *Upaniṣad* must now be considered. The Text does not promise an enhancement of worldly goods, or success in human affairs. It is, in fact, pointing away from the usual preoccupations which hold the attention of human beings. It is not reasonable to expect anyone to forsake the concrete world of pleasure and, no doubt some pain, for the sake of a nebulous region of uncertainty. Sayana here refers to the very beautiful *śloka* from *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* which has been a favourite quote for commentators down the centuries, as indicating the fruit to be achieved: "The knot of the heart is penetrated, all doubts are resolved, all bondages are destroyed, on seeing Him who is here and beyond."¹

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1. *bhidyate hṛdayagranthiścchidyante sarvasaṁśayaḥ kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi tasmin dīṣṭe parāvare. Muṇḍakopaniṣad*
II. 2.8. Sayana, p. 9.

The word 'knot' suggests recalcitrance; a problem which stays and is not amenable to the methodology of whence and wherefore. In general, if a problem can be traced to its cause, even if the removal of the cause is not possible, a lessening of its power for unhappiness is experienced. A knot, however, does not denote any concrete problem as such, but a tightening of the chords of the heart in hurt which may seem irrational and is mostly inarticulate but nevertheless, real. This knot of the heart is surrounded by doubts which feed and sustain it. How is this knot to be overcome—not by slow unravelling but by the piercing of it to the core so that it stands annulled. On seeing Brahman all doubts disperse, just as the shining sun puts to rout the clouds by which the sky was overcast.

It is to be noted here that the Text chosen by commentators does not say that everything will vanish as *māyā*. The emphasis is on true knowledge.

Then comes the consideration of the third point regarding the structure of a book under study, namely, how does the work propose to bring about the fruit promised to the reader. In other words, how is the book related to the subject matter in hand. To take the definition of this requirement (*anubandha*) also from Sayana: "The relation between the discourse on knowledge and the discourse on action is that of the end and the means thereof."¹

The subject of the Upanishad being Brahman-knowledge or the knowledge of the unity of the self with Brahman, the yearning for this knowledge can be awakened by actions performed in accordance with scriptural injunctions. The Vedantic tradition of Samkaracarya maintains clearly that the continuity between action in the world and knowledge of Brahman lies in the former creating a situation where the wish to know Brahman may awaken. Paradoxically

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1. *Jñānakāṇḍasya karmakāṇḍena saha sādhyasādhanaabhāvalakṣaṇa sambandhaḥ*. Sayana, p. 18.

therefore, the relation is non-existent because the condition must become nothing after the effect is in evidence, and this is how it is brought out by the *Upaniṣad* under consideration here, according to Samkaracarya's commentary on the Text.

Samkaracarya very clearly classifies the possible points of view which may be put forward by the interrogator as to the sufficiency of action, for acquiring ultimate felicity. It may be said that (i) *karma* alone may bring about this ultimate state, or (ii) *karma* aided by *jñāna* knowledge, or (iii) that *karma* and *jñāna* (knowledge) together may do so, or even (iv) knowledge aided by *karma* or (v) lastly by *jñāna* alone.¹

In summation of Samkaracarya's arguments, which are stated in other Upanishad-bhasyas² also in great detail it may be said : Liberation is beginningless and endless and all inclusive. It is not a state to be brought about at the cessation of a process. The Self is eternally liberated. It does not know that this is so; therefore, knowledge alone sets him free from his ignorance. The 'Real' can be *known* only and not brought into existence in the form of a new accomplishment. Liberation, therefore, does not answer to any aspect of *karma* (action) because by *karma* we mean precisely what is capable of bringing about changes, namely, beginnings, modifications, transformations and destructions. Liberation is ever beyond these modes of process; even a touch of *karma*, therefore, cannot be allowed to remain in the dimension of yearning which is directed toward knowledge of the Self. Action cannot bring about something which is already there; on the contrary, it can actually facilitate its non-revelation by drawing attention away from it.

1. Samkarabhasya on Tait. I. II.4.

2. Kena Up. Bh., Introduction and IV. 1., and *Īśopani-sadbhāṣya* Introduction.

What, then, is the role of moral disciplines in life, which the first chapter of *Taittirīyopaniṣad* sets forth in great detail for the pupil and which is conscientiously and insightfully annotated upon by Samkaracarya ?

The place of dutiful action in the world is of supreme importance. This can be seen from the fact that all aspects of such an education are incorporated in the scriptures. Whatever concerns human life is not extraneous to Vedic literature; therefore, the pupils are to be taught properly in the ways of conduct that will be demanded of them by the world in which they will be required to live.

The first chapter of *Taittirīyopaniṣad* is called *Sikṣā-valli*, that is, the chapter in which are treated such matters as must be learnt by the pupil for an adequate education, namely, the rules of correct pronunciation, without which the real meanings of words may not be appreciated; the categories of relationships which obtain in the physical world; then the supreme principle 'Om' which symbolises all reality. Through these teachings the pupil is instructed in the ways of acquiring all enjoyments from progeny to the highest heavens and all qualities of the head and heart conducive to a good and prosperous living in the world (I, 1-IV).

Thereupon the meditation on Brahman is taught. (I V-VII) Brahman is described in many ways as subject of meditation and also as the symbol *Om* (I. VIII). All these lessons are in the form of aphorisms; it can be understood easily that here the guidance of a knowledgeable teacher is indispensable. The ninth lesson talks about the over-riding concerns which must impel the student: as, for example, righteousness (*ṛiṣam*), learning (*svādhyāya*), truth (*satyam*), austerity (*tapas*), control of inner and outer organs, duties in the world, entertainment of the stranger as guest, social good conduct, family life and its sustenance till the birth of a grandson (i. e. ensuring the continuity of family life).

The tenth lesson describing the ecstasy of a man of

realization is in the form of a *mantra* to be borne in mind, so that the world can be kept in its proper perspective. In the eleventh lesson the sphere of activity is described in the detailing of duties to the student who is about to leave the academy of the teacher and is to take up his position in the world. This is one of the longer lessons and spoken by the teacher to the student on the eve of his departure. The very first injunction is that truth is to be spoken and practiced, no deviation from truth must take place; righteousness must be cultivated. The pupil must discharge his obligation to his teacher (before entering the world) and also to his family by getting married. Carelessness in anything is not allowable; without being cruel to others, he must observe the right of self-protection; he must discharge all duties of the house-holder; be specially respectful toward his mother, his father and his teacher; the guest is to be honoured; all actions which are praiseworthy are to be resorted to but not others.

The lesson then lays down what can be called a remarkable criterion for ethical judgements : it says that when in doubt, look about yourself and see how good men of the highest integrity of character, the highly respected brahmans, "who are not cruel", behave, and take your cue from them. The keynote of this lesson in good conduct is, therefore, a kindness toward all and the inculcation of a spirit of rendering service to those to whom it is due. Even for "accused people" the same rule holds good. It does not speak of meeting out justice to wrongdoers, but again the criterion is to be guided by the judgement of those who are well versed in such matters and who are good and righteous and not cruel and are desirous of acquiring merit for their actions (deliberations in this case). Morality, therefore, seems squarely based upon good precepts rather than one's own evaluations of a situation.

It conjures up a picture of a well-ordered society, a society which is free to follow in the pursuit of all the agreeable aims of life and also to devote itself to the acquiring of

THE ONTOLOGY OF BLISS

177

learning and wisdom. Even so, there is the unmistakable refrain or an exhortation toward a higher life. The *śikṣā-vallī* concludes with the opening peace chant as its twelfth lesson. If we are to be guided by Samkaracarya, and the tradition of exegesis he started, we must follow him in saying: that the world which is taught in this *vallī* is to be taken as: a halting place, a 'caravansarai, and not the ultimate sphere of human achievement. We cannot escape this conclusion because to the commentary on the eleventh *anuvāka* itself he attaches his most devastating arguments against the possibility of action leading to the knowledge of Brahman. Action can accomplish and achieve every kind of happiness from the satisfaction of the senses to the felicity of the highest heavens; but this entire range of values still belongs to the realm of ignorance, because the Self as Brahman is not known. Unity cannot be polarised into any kind of duality, doer and the done by, knower and the known, enjoyer and the enjoyed or the experiencer and the experienced. To rid the Self of these falsities which give rise to doubts, sorrows and fear of deprivations, knowledge itself must prevail, knowledge which is real and which is of the nature of Bliss and on the occurrence of which, nothing else remains to be done, known, acquired or feared. And hence the fact of the first chapter concluding with the opening chant as its *twelfth lesson*. As we see, this bracketing of the teaching regarding the world by the invocation for *Brahman-knowledge*, separates *karma* from *jñāna* as a means thereof but establishes the sphere of action as the take-off point for that transnatural dimension which is only thus tenuously related to it. The book then proceeds to deal with the question of Brahman-knowledge as the main subject after establishing this crucial discontinuity.

The last question to be answered is, for whom is the work made available? Sayana following Samkarcarya says : the seeker of knowledge is addressed here and not the

man who is engaged in activity.¹ The candidate for liberation is one who realises that he must be seized with the yearning for freedom to the exclusion of all else which determines his behaviour. Since, ordinarily nobody is thus seized, or alternately, everybody although entertaining reservations is open to conviction, it may be said that in principle the *Upaniṣad* is meant for all who care to follow its lessons toward Self-realization.

The tradition of Vedanta, maintains that a man possessed of (1) the power of discrimination (to distinguish between the real and the transient), (2) detachment, (3) the 6 treasures of good conduct, (quietude, restraint, aloofness, fortitude, reverence and certitude) and (4) the yearning for liberation, is qualified to enter into an enquiry toward Brahman-knowledge. The natural theatre of activity for man is thus the preparing ground for bringing about the state of yearning; as such all are qualified (or not qualified as the case may be) for asking the crucial question regarding the message of the Upanishads. The exclusivity demanded here, pertains to human nature as such; to choose the trans-natural, forsaking the security of the natural is to be very peculiar indeed; but this 'peculiarity' is sought to be made a desirable option for those who wish to travel toward the realisation of the ultimate aim of human life.

Summing up the four-fold scheme (*anubandha-catustaya*) it may be said that the unity of Self and Brahman which is expounded in the *Upaniṣad*, is done so by showing up the utter disassociation of the Self from the determinations of its worldly experiences; the result of this discrimination is supreme happiness which man is ever in search of and this being so the *Upaniṣad* is addressed to all who may choose to attend to its message.

The Nature of Man

The *Ānanda-valli* opens with the statement : '*brahmavid-
āpnoti param*' (the knower of Brahman attains the supreme)

1. Sayana, p. 26.

and goes on to define '*param*' as '*satyam*' (real)' *jñānam*' (consciousness) and '*anantaṁ*, (infinite).

The teacher in his exegesis here, is held up by the first crucial question, namely, how can the infinite Brahman be attained by man who is definitely finite. To this question is addressed the description of man as nothing but the eternal Self hidden by the many layers of functional identifications with which he is ordinarily preoccupied. The Self is nothing but Brahman itself and by the word 'attainment' is meant Selfrealisation.

The Text in five lessons (*anuvākas*) describes the nature of man in the imagery of a bird. A bird always signifies a creature who is able to bring together earth and heaven by its flight; a creature of the world, yet which is not bound totally to it. It seems, therefore, almost natural for man to be described in the structural likeness of a bird. The description is from the most gross elements in man's make up to its most subtle elements, but all are of equal importance because it is Brahman who is manifest in all names and forms which make up the world of our experience.

The Text states :

From that Brahman, which is the Self, was produced space. From space emerged air. From air was born fire. From fire was created water. From water sprang up earth. From earth were born herbs. From the herbs was produced food. From food was born man. that man, such as he is, is a product of the essence of food : Of him this, indeed, is the head; this is the southern side; this is the northern side; this is the Self; this is the supporting base.¹

Describing the gross form of flesh and blood, the Text proceeds, in the same manner, to describe the subtle forms of the vital air which is found to be breathing in the body

1. Tait. II. 1:1!

(II. ii); the mind which gives sentience to the entire body (II. iii); knowledge (*viññāna*) which permeates the mind of man (II. iv) and lastly the innermost sheath of pleasure which man knows as joyousness, enjoyment, felicity, ecstasy and bliss (II.v) which is the ultimate condition making it possible to live, to think and to know.¹

These are the five sheaths which hide the self from knowing itself as Brahman. It identifies itself with its body which is sustained by the food it ingests and food in turn consumes the body it has created. The gross body sustains the body of the vital airs again which supports the mental body. Without the mind the knowing faculties could not function and in the knowledge structure resides the subtlest of the requirements which go toward creating the conditions which are peculiar to human life. To strive for joy and to seek to avoid pain makes the human being belong to the world of all creatures and also sets him apart from his fellow beings, because he alone is capable of actualising the promise of joy, a future in joyousness or the possibility of a pure joy, unalloyed by sorrow. This, then is the supreme incentive (*pravartaka*) toward the trans-natural region of Textual discourses.²

The self is to be taught discrimination between Itself and the not-self. The Self is so identified with the body, breath, mind and consciousness that it understands the entire world as given to experiences of the I or ego-consciousness. The 'I' knows itself to be short or tall, black or fair, etc., as living and willing, as feeling various emotions and as knowing and striving in the world for fruits of actions. Just as the logic of the "moon on the bough"³ is used for

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1. Who indeed could live, (and) who indeed could breathe, were there no delight in (this vast and spreading) sky ?
Tait. II. vii.
 2. *Śureśvara Vartikam*, II.31.
 3. *Śureśvara Vartikam*, II.232. Attention is first drawn to the object which is clearly visible, a branch of a tree

indicating the presence of an all but invisible moon, the five sheaths of the Self are pointed out in order to reveal the presence of the self-evident Self by a progressive disassociation from all false identities.

Paradoxically, the five sheaths which effectively keep the self, as it were, preoccupied on these planes, are also the conditions which give man his precedence over other living beings. By engaging in karma, he is able to acquire that state of mental attitude which propels him toward the yearning for knowledge.¹ His experience of happiness in the world sets him on the path to a greater happiness. No other fruit can work as sufficient incentive for man for this purpose.

Samkarcarya's exegesis of these Textual lessons follows a pattern which leads on to a demarcation of the first chapter of the *Upanisad* from the other two. In the first chapter, the Text has with great clarity defined man's duties in the world, given him guidelines on good conduct and described to him the innermost structures of his nature which draws him apart from the realm of other beings and sets him in a class by himself as the being who may inquire into the nature of the highest truth, namely Brahman. It is true

and it is said "look carefully, the new moon is just above the branch". Needless to say that there is no connection between the moon and the tree.

1. Samkarabhasya on Tait. II, 1,1.

Samkaracarya cites here, the following *Aitareya-Āranyaka* Text (II. iii 2,5), 'In man alone is the self most manifest. He speaks what he knows; he sees what he knows; he knows what will happen tomorrow; he knows the higher and lower worlds; he aspires to achieve immortality through mortal things. He is thus endowed (with discrimination) while other beings have consciousness of hunger and thirst only'. (Swami Gambhirananda's translation *Eight Upanisads* Vol. 1, p. 3 4.)

that man seeks happiness; Brahman being of the nature of Bliss, is the natural quest for man's ultimate fulfilment. The question which must be answered here, is why should this quest for Brahman-knowledge, require man to engage in the process of cancellation of the five planes of existence before he can realize the self-evident Self.

conditions which give man his present state of existence. By engaging in karma he is able to acquire that state of mental attitude which is the first step towards the quest for knowledge. The experience of happiness in the world sets him on the path to a greater happiness. The other four are work as a means to the end for this purpose.

Sankarabharata's system of three Textual lessons follows a pattern which leads on to a demonstration of the first chapter of the Upanishad from the other two. In the first chapter the Text has with great clarity defined man's duties in the world, given him guidelines on good conduct and described to him the innermost structure of his nature which draws him apart from the realm of other beings and sets him in a class by himself as the being who may require into the nature of the highest truth, namely Brahman. It is true

and this is the "look" which the new mind is just above the "stand". It is the "look" which is the connection between the mind and the text.

Sankarabharata on Tat. II. 1.1. Sankarabharata also gives the following explanation of the text (II. 1.1.2): "In man alone is the self most manifest. He speaks what he knows, he sees what he knows, he knows what will happen tomorrow. He knows the higher and lower worlds, he aspires to achieve immortality through mortal things. He is thus endowed with (discrimination) while other beings have no discrimination of higher and lower only. (Sankarabharata on Tat. II. 1.1.2.)"

Chapter Twelve

Renunciation as the pre-condition of Realization.

The question which was posed at the end of the previous Chapter may be stated in different words: Why should Bliss be related to renunciation and not simply to a deepening of the experience of *ananda* which is already at the core of human experience. Samkaracarya, however, is clear on this point:

The *Upaṇiṣads* are teaching the highest aim in life for man; the teaching is about knowledge of Brahman. They aim at freeing man from bondage to the world.....

(Tait. I. 11).

Śureśvara writes more uncompromisingly:

The renunciation of all action is the only means for liberation. Brahman is known only by those who have renounced all. For the renunciate alone is the realisation of the highest.¹

The greatest opposition to this statement comes from within the tradition itself which may be supposed to be drawing its support from the first chapter of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*. The five-sheath (*pañca-kośa*) analysis of the human condition, seems to support the injunction laid on man for the living of a fruitful and useful life in the world. If Brahman is itself manifest in the succeeding planes of gross

to subtle material, then it can certainly be realised as the highest God (*paramātmān*) pervading all creation. In fact how is it at all possible to depart the realm of Brahman? In the language of the traditionalists, which is summarised by Anandagiri in his gloss on this section of the *Vartika*, it is said in effect: Injunctions about action is stated in the earlier part of the Vedas and so are injunctions given for pursuing the path of knowledge in the later portions (Vedānta). From this a transition alone is called for and not a cancellation for the sake of liberation which may be attained by the man of knowledge following the precepts of the Vedas.¹

With the question we come to the heart of the matter. Indian philosophy is not identical with Samkaracarya's philosophy; Samkaracarya is not acceptable to *Mīmāṃsakas* (those who stay with the injunctions regarding (ritual) action in the world in the Vedas), on the one hand, and *dvaitavādins* (those who would stay with the crucial difference between God and creation allowing it to determine all attitudes), on the other. In Samkaracarya himself one cannot detect any deviation from the position of absolute cancellation of action. *Śureśvara* brings out this position in Samkaracarya very clearly when he states:

No Vedic injunctions are to be treated as dogma; they are for the removal of ignorance only regarding the means of attainments of the aims of human life. That heaven and other such felicities are to be aspired for one already knows, the means thereof only are pointed out in the scriptures, because without such knowledge, man would not know, how to achieve heaven. Similarly in the Vedānta portion of the Veda, the identity of Brahman and Atman is pointed out, which cannot be known by any other source of knowledge.

1. Anandagiri on *Śureśvara Vārtikāṃ*, II.10-16.

The Text saying 'Try to know that Brahman' (Tait. III.1) is an incentive toward the acquiring of that knowledge and not an injunction which must be obeyed.¹

When we come to the second chapter of the Upanishad, we are to see clearly, according to this tradition, that the five sheaths are the different planes of activity which make up the world of experience for man. Every human being identifies himself with his body and behaves accordingly; so is he identified with life, without which the body is nothing; both body and life are made meaningful only by the mind's activity. All three are within the scope of *viññāna* or the agent-sheath. The inner-most sheath of bliss is the 'enjoyer' sheath. The ego which feels, knows wills and enjoys moves from plane to plane; this succession is the 'cave'² which hides the '*ātman*' (Self) effectively in Self-forgetfulness amidst all these ego activities.

By naming all possible fields of experience, attention is directed toward that underlying principle which remains aloof from all these diversifications. As stated earlier, by the logic of the 'moon on the bough' the presence of *ātman* is indicated as that to which all these activities refer. Nobody experiences or knows of anything beyond the bliss of deep sleep; yet, asks, the *Pañcadaśī* 'Who can deny that by which these are experienced ?'³ The *ātman* is unknown, not because it does not exist but precisely because of its self-luminous nature. How should that by which everything else is known, be known itself? Only the total abeyance of the not-self would leave *ātman* shining by its own light. The entire region of 'you' (*yusmat*) covered by the five sheaths is totally other to the 'I' (*asmāt*) and as such only by complete dissipation of itself is capable of revealing the presence of *ātman* as the one without a second⁴.

1. *Śureśvara Vartikam*. II, 16-17.
2. *The Pañcadaśī*, by *Vidaraṇya*. III.1 & 2.
3. *The Pañcadaśī*, *op. cit.*, III. 12.
4. *Śureśvara Vartikam*. II. 234-235.

The five sheaths are the region, therefore, of ignorance. The Self wrongly thinks itself as the doer, enjoyer, etc. The *Upanisad* by stating that 'the knower of Brahman attains the highest' inculcates a desire to know¹. It is nothing more than an indicator toward a search for the ultimate reality. It is a pointer to the fact of the finitude of the I-consciousness. The ego-consciousness in juxtaposition with the promise of Infinitude, must face the fact of its ignorance and a doubt about the real nature of its own experience of the world. The possibility of transcendence is meaningful to those only who are desirous of liberation. To desire liberation means an awareness of the state of bondage and ignorance. To awaken this awareness is the aim of the Text, so that the seeker may start on the path of enquiry. Without the *Upanishads*, how should man know that he is in bondage and must learn to see through the five veils of ignorance in order to achieve liberation.

The crucial point of the discourse regarding the five sheaths lies in the fact of its including bliss as one of the veils. Infinity repels any kind of fragmentation; the highest achievements within the realm of finitude will be a pale shadow of the 'experience of the fulness of Brahman'. In other words, the five-veil analysis would be pointless, if it is not taken to signify a concealment of Reality. According to Samkaracarya the concealing itself could not be known without the *Upanishadic* statement regarding the ultimate nature of Brahman. If the Infinite is to be attained by the Self, than the Self itself is nothing but the Infinite in ignorant forgetfulness of its true nature. The rest of the discourse on the definition of Brahman and the mode of approaching the question of its realisation is in order with the explication of man being in ignorance of his true nature. The separation, therefore, of the spheres of action and knowledge is by virtue of this very nature of man. The I-consciousness is the doer and enjoyer and knower; as

1. Ibid., II.27-31.

such it is aware of its own limitation. In paying heed to the message of the Upanishads, he is made aware of the possibility of transcendence. Since 'an experiencing' (direct knowledge) of Brahman, will bring about the dissolution of limitations, this is what he wills, when he accepts the desirability of aspiring for bliss. The language of will in this context has a limited use only. Since the ego-consciousness knows itself as the doer, it must know itself as the renouncer as well. The world of praxis gives meaning to both extremes in the range of human activity. A loosening of the ties of the world, therefore, must characterise the aspirant for bliss. The question, here, is not about the world, or even whether to renounce it or not. This is a meaningless question to raise in this context. The world actually cannot be renounced; it can only lose its significance for the aspirant for bliss. Renunciation is only in the nature of a waiting upon the possibility of an 'experience', on the occurrence of which, nothing else will remain to be attained.

The world, then, is not antagonistic but only irrelevant to the issue. Liberation cannot be 'brought about', 'modified' 'changed' or 'destroyed' etc.¹ It can be realized as truth only. There are differences in the qualitative and quantitative evaluations of actions because such gradations obtain in the feelings of joys and sorrows which are related to these actions. No questions regarding willing, knowing, or feeling can arise where a measureless plenum of joyous reality is being posited by the *Upaniṣad*.

Put in other words, it may be said, that two different orders of separation can be distinguished : One is to regard the world as trivial and discard it; the other is to see through it as the not-self and thus experience an inwardness of the earstwhile outgoing faculties. This 'transnatural' movement, is the beginning of that yearning for knowledge

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1. These four movements are associated with actions brought about willingly.

which takes its form in a mind denuded of other desires. Liberation cannot be brought about by the mind; but to the sphere of willing belongs the purification of the mind. The movement which is called yearning for knowledge, stirs in an unclouded and uncluttered mind alone. Action in the world can only prolong the world; it cannot suddenly reveal Brahman in the world because the world is precisely what veils Brahman. Knowledge alone must rise to the challenge of the mystery so carefully delineated and preserved by the Upanishads.

The Mode of Imparting Knowledge of Brahman

If it is accepted that the first stage in the acquiring of Brahman-knowledge is an enquiry which is capable of evoking a response from a Teacher, then the next question is, how is the Teacher to impart a knowledge which is stated to be almost beyond human intelligibility. A variety of procedures are to be found in the Upanishads. Every Teacher has his own way of imparting instruction. It can even be seen that those who are not alert enough to persist after, perhaps, the first lesson are not prevented from resuming their previous positions in life, well satisfied with the little knowledge that they had acquired. In this mutuality of the Teacher and the taught, the fact which emerges clearly is the spirit of freedom which permeates the dialogues. Unless the relevance of the knowledge sought to be imparted is acceptable to the pupil as such, he does not qualify as a pupil.

The *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* epitomises in its small compact form all that has been said so far. As we have seen, it begins by describing the range of activities, worthy of a good man wishing to lead a prosperous life in the world. The point of the Text is that there is a second chapter as well as a third, and so also it is with man's life. Men desire, all along, happiness but this is so fragmented in the world as frequently not to be worthwhile at all. It is to be seen easily that the best of worlds is not enough for the satiety of man's desires

which are legion. This is so because the desires themselves are seeds which give rise to other desires. How then to contain these waves of ceaseless activity which could prove to be ultimately self defeating as sheer boredom, if nothing else.

To this man of unending desire for happiness the Upanishad promises an all-encompassing joy which being attained, he will be in possession in its entirety of all that there is; and thus alone can be free from the possibility of any break in the continuous state of happiness which he desires. (The knower of Brahman attains the supreme).¹ The question here is, how should the plausibility of this 'promise' be made clear to the pupil? Samkaracarya writes that to be established in one's own very nature (Self) is after all supreme felicity, and this is easily accepted by everyone. Recovery of one's own Self is Self-realization, since the Self itself is Brahman which is to be known². The enquiry into Brahmanknowledge, then, belongs closer to the heart of the seeker than was perhaps realized earlier.

Since the nature of one's own Self is to be understood, first the *Upaniṣad* engages the attention of the pupil toward the hiddenness of this Self under sheaths of extraneous coverings. The veiling of the Self consists in its identifying itself with the gross and fine functions which reflect the light from within. The ego-consciousness thinks, it has a body, a mind, an intellect and that it enjoys things of the world. This identification is the life of ignorance which needs to be penetrated one by one, because the Self in reality lies beyond the reach of the five sheaths.³

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1. Tait. II. 1-1
 2. *svātmanyāvathānam paraprāptih* — Samkarabhasya on Tait. I. 1.1.
 4. Tait. II. 2-7. It is generally acknowledged that the major theme of the entire *Śruti* literature is to state the unity of *ātman* (Self) and *brahman*. This is considered exemplified in the four Great Statements

The graded description of the nature of man shows up his range of activities in the world. While he is actively employed in the world, his spiritual aspirations are in abeyance, and the Self lies hidden in the innermost recesses of the heart, designated for that reason as a 'cave' (*guhā*.) The Self is the ultimate referent for all activities, physical, mental or intellectual, undertaken by man. To the extent it is disengaged, the mind reflects its peace and tranquility. We can see a daily example of this in the condition of deep sleep from which a man awakes refreshed and happy. In deep sleep, the Self shines in its own light just like the lamp in the banquet hall when the party is over and it is emptied of all participants.¹

To the pupil must be conveyed the idea of the constant presence of the Self, although it is not obviously known as such to him. Sheath-analysis (*kośa*) was initiated with a view to drawing his attention away from the gross toward the subtle. He is familiarised with the idea of a separation of the Self from its planes of activities. Where, then, does the Self reside? To this question the Text says: In the cave of the great sky (Tait. II. 1-1).

According to Samkaracarya, the word 'cave' (*guhā*) indicates a hiding of diversification;² it denotes therefore

(*mahāvākyas*) occurring in the four Vedas. These are the key concepts which irradiate the meaning of the Upanishads in which they are located. In the dialogues where these statements occur, the 'thou' of the pupil (or alternately the 'I' of the seeker) is sought to be unified with the 'that' of all discourses, namely with *brahman*, which is named as such in three of the statements. It may be said that, the analysis of the five sheaths (*kośas*) in the *Taittirīya Upanisad* is a thematization of the 'tvam' principle of the Text That Thou Art (*tattvamasi*). Chh. VI. 10. 3.

1. *The Pañcadaśī*, X. 11.,
2. Samkarabhāṣya on Tait. II. 1. 1.

the intellect which hides the triad of knower-known-knowledge or alternately, the two disparate aims of human life, namely, enjoyment and liberation. It is the intellect which is the subtlest covering which hides effectively the Self from the egoity of man. This 'cave' is situated in the great sky of the heart, so the Self may be said to reside in the innermost recesses of one's being itself.

The imagery of the cave is frequently used in the Upanishads. The word evokes an image of hiddenness; of not being available to superficial perceptions. This idea is utilized where the Self is being especially described. We find the following passage in the *Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

That great birthless Self which identified with the intellect and is in the midst of the organs, lies in the space that is within the heart. It is the controller of all, the lord of all, the ruler of all. It does not grow better through good work nor worse through bad work.¹

Samkaracarya, commenting on this passage, writes that the space within the lotus of the heart is the seat of the intellect. The Self is said to be residing as if, in the intellect, that is the space within the heart. The usage of the term 'space' opens up before the mind the idea of the Self as boundless and ethereal and all-pervading, which is not so realized because the intellect imposes its own limitations on it. Just as the space within the pot is identical with the space outside it and is one with it in its pervasiveness of the entire world, so the Self hidden in the 'cave' of heart is one with Brahman, the one Reality which excludes nothing at all.

Another well-known passage makes this idea quite clear :

That which is (designated) *Brahman*, even that is this *ākāśa* outside the body. That which is the *ākāśa* inside the body, even that is this *ākāśa* within the (lotus of the) heart. This

1. Br. IV. iV. 22.

brahman is all-filling and unchanging. He who knows (*brahman*) thus, gets all fulfilling and unchanging prosperity.¹

In these, and such other statements,² we may see that the heart is given a crucial meaning; it is in the nature of a threshold, which allows one to enter, or it may also mark the limit, which precludes entry. Following Samkaracarya in his commentaries on these various passages, the imagery of the heart as the seat of the supreme may be construed in this manner :

It is not at all remarkable that man should identify himself with his physical body and the principle of life which animates it. Without life the body would be an inert mass of matter. It is also possible to see that the mind controls or indulges the impulses arising out of the fact of this life pulsating through our body. Further, the intellect can contemplate the graded levels of this unity which is called a human being and which we know as ourselves. The body arises out of the gross elements of nature and the vital functions are their subtle forms. the intellect is the most subtle and in being able to reflect the light coming from within, is seen to be functioning independently. Just as we ascribe the glow to the moon which actually comes from the Sun, we mistakenly think of the 'I' as an entity by itself. Beyond these four levels of existence lies the plane of the heart which enjoys happiness and also has to suffer sorrows. This condition especially makes us vulnerably human; it is our weakness as well as our strength. It can be presumed that gods and other celestial beings do not suffer or enjoy as we do. The heart then is the gateway to the sphere of sorrows and enjoyments, accomplishments and disappointments and all other polarities which make up the universe of our living

1. Chh. Up. III. 12. 9.

2. The Self is surely in the heart", *Praśna Upaniṣad* III. 6. "prajna is in the space within the heart", *Māndūkya-Kārikā*, I. 2. Also in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I. 2. 12.

in the world. Yet it is also the threshold to the other dimension of life, because it is intolerant of sorrow and is forever searching for happiness. It is stated in the scriptures that Brahman is of the nature of delight itself:

That is of the flavour of delight alone, a taste of which makes a man happy; it is that delight which radiates happiness through everyone.¹

The heart in search of happiness creates the last barrier as it were, to the glimpsing of the Self which resides hidden within it. It is a barrier because for the sake of the fragmented enjoyments of the world the plenum of joy which is almost within reach is not looked for or thus appreciated; therefore, the most recalcitrant veiling is the veiling of the heart. Yet, by virtue of this very thirst for happiness, it can transform itself into a 'bridge' (*setu*) to the realization of the Self within.²

The imagery of the heart emphasizes the importance of the inwardisation of attention which is dispersed in the outside world. The pupil has been brought to a point which is crucial because it is here that a transformation should be effected. From this point of view, we may appreciate the fact that greater interiorization is said to lie in the region of awareness, rather than in intellection: We see that the sheath of bliss (*ānandamaya kośa*) is more inner than the sheath of the intellect (*vijñānamaya kośa*).

The demand for a transition comes from the fact that the sheath of bliss (*ānandamaya kośa*) is also a veil for Brahman. How, then, should one go beyond these coverings which hide the reality of Brahman, or in other words how

1. Tait. II. 7. 1.

2. Mund. II. 2.5. "Know that Self alone that is one without a second, on which are strung heaven, the earth and the interspace, the mind and the vital forces together with all the other organs; and give up all other talks. This is the bridge leading to immortality."

should one know that Brahman is known? The text states clearly :

He who realizes Brahman attains the highest. With reference to that very fact it has been declared : 'Brahman is Reality, Consciousness, Infinitude; he who realizes Him treasured in the cave, in the highest space, even as Brahman the omniscient, fulfills all wants at once.¹

The above passage is justly famous for comprising in its pithy saying the entire teaching of the advaita philosophy; this is the text which defines Brahman as Reality, Consciousness and Infinity. Leaving this definition aside for the time being, we may consider the last phrase which says that on knowing Brahman every want is fulfilled, not as they are fulfilled, one by one in the world but all together and all at once². That is, on knowing Brahman, everything is achieved and nothing at all remains undone or unknown, and, therefore it is a state of joyous tranquility.

According to Samkaracarya, the purport of the entire second chapter of the Upanishad is to guide the pupil to the awareness of Brahman by knowledge alone. How is a man to become aware of the innermost truth lodged in his heart, a truth which is quite unlike anything he is familiar with in the world? How can he be guided to this notion of freedom, after a suspension as it were of all supportive ideas which are aids to his thinking. The Text, like a mother guiding the tottering steps of her child, takes the seeker of knowledge by hand and slowly moves him on from one plane to another till he reaches the limit of the joyful state of the enjoyer. The I-consciousness which knows itself as knower, agent and enjoyer is capable of making the leap in thought by which it may envisage the possibility of arriving at the unity of Self and Brahman, a superlative gain, on the acquisition of which everything else is automatically obtained at the same time.

1. Tait. II.1.1.

2. Samkarabhasya on Tait. II.1.1.

RENUNCIATION AS THE PRE-CONDITION OF REALIZATION 195

The desire for happiness finds its supreme fulfilment in the acquiring of *Brahman-knowledge*. The Self which stands by implication in the relation of the ultimate for all activities of the body, mind and intellect is to be seen as the Witness-consciousness by whom everything is illuminated. The supreme truth to be realized is the identity of the Witness-Self with Brahman.

Chapter Thirteen

Being as Bliss

A. What can be known about Brahman ?

This is a crucial question, because many important statements regarding Brahman, in the *Upanishads* seem carefully emptied of cognitive value. As a matter of fact, a plethora of paradoxes can be culled from the Texts regarding the nature of Brahman :

Remaining Stationary, It outruns all other runners. *Īsopaniṣad* 4.

That moves, That does not move; That is far off, That is very near; That is inside all, and That is outside. *Īsopaniṣad* 5.

It is known to him to whom It is unknown; he does not know to whom It is known. It is unknown to those who know well, and known to those who do not know. *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* II.3.

While sitting, It travels far away; while sleeping, It goes everywhere. *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* I. 2-21

If we work with the idea that these paradoxes are not aimed at creating confusion but only to break the mould of rational thought with which we are familiar, then we begin to understand the significance of this pattern of writing. The language of paradox seems to give a wider horizon to the region of discourse than is possible by other linguistic structures. The individual is required to stretch his imagination to the utmost limit, and yet at the end he finds himself in confrontation with a mystery only. Under the rubric of this usage of language, which is for a veiling rather than a revealing, may be classed all those passages which speak

of the unknowability of Brahman by any scale of human reckoning :

Failing to reach (Brahman) words with mind
turn back —

Tait. II. 4.1

This self is not attained through study, nor
through the intellect, nor through much hearing

Mund. III. 2.34.

The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor
mind.

Kena I. 3.

It may be supposed that those Texts help to tighten the veil of impenetrability bruited by the paradoxical statements; but it is also possible to consider these difficult passages as annotations to the paradoxes. Their relevance should not be seen to lie in annihilating thought but in providing it with a challenge toward a different kind of effort. The language of a 'beyond', however negatively stated, does indicate a way; it affirms a continuity with one's measure of understanding. These passages hold together, the hiddenness of Brahman together with its 'speakability'. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that all Upanishadic discourses, in general, seem to fall short of penetrating the veil of mystery which surrounds the subject of the conversation.

The necessity for an insistence on the factor of veiling arises because man does not know that he does not know. How should a man, who is sleeping, know that he is asleep ? We know ourselves as agents in the world, as knowers and as enjoyers as well; we do not know that these are layers of not-self of that Self which in its true state of being is one with Brahman;¹ that is to say, a state of realization of unity with Brahman would be a state of liberation. Short of that, ignorance is encompassing; it stretches across the entire spectrum of human understanding. It pervades the entire sphere of human activity and endeavour. In order to create an opening in this all-enveloping state of ignorance, the

1. *Svayam caitma param brahmetyuktam.* Samkarabhasya on Tait. I. 1.

Upanishads use the strange language of paradoxes and 'unknowability'. This language, naturally, could not be used for any discussion pertaining to the world. Its aim is to loosen the meaning from words and dislodge their hold on our minds; it raises the dialogue to a trans-natural sphere, whence a questioning into the nature of the *aupanishadik puruṣaṁ* (The Being spoken of in the Upanishads alone) could arise.

It becomes clear that with the veiling of the subject of Brahman, we also come to the awareness of the irrelevance of the world's sphere of activities. The Upanishadic language aims at creating the requisite attitude for a relinquishing of the familiar structures of support with which we hold on to the world. To ask a question regarding the nature of Brahman, is already to renounce the world a little; or, in other words, a distancing from the world alone qualifies a seeker of truth to engage in any dialogue concerning Brahman.

B. The Desire for knowledge

As stated earlier, the meaning of renunciation, then, is a burning desire for knowledge which cannot be quenched by anything short of that realization, and on the occurrence of which nothing else remains to be achieved anymore. This desire is positive, it is not a negative disillusionment with the world; it is evoked by a glimmering of an idea that perhaps something more needs to be understood of the self than is seen by its activities in the world. This desire to know, this yearning to overcome the state of ignorance, cannot be compared to an intellectual curiosity about the nature of things, because the latter does not demand a renunciation of all other props to human existence. Moreover, no specific pattern of behaviour or station in life, no age, or sex, or state of learning is especially related to the awakening of the yearning for knowledge nor is it held as a bar to knowledge. The world, in short, must be set at naught by the person who would unlock the door to the mystery of the dialogue

between Teacher and pupil. *Nārada*,¹ the celestial being, the old king *Bṛhadīśa*,² the young boy *Naciketa*,³ the six ascetic pupils of the sage *Pippalada*,⁴ and *Maitreyi*,⁵ the beloved wife of the sage *Yājñavalkya*, amongst others, have figured in the Upanishads as interlocuters, whose questions have brought forth the much treasured and closely guarded teaching about Brahman.

From this perspective we see that the role of the desire for knowledge is crucial in the context of the Upanishads. It may be said that an incipient awareness of the veil, brought to the forefront of the enquiring mind becomes an yearning for true knowledge. In this context alone we may appreciate the unusual linguistic structures of Upanishadic statements which are not mere pedagogical devices for awakening ordinary curiosity. The questioning, the Upanishads seek to awake, has to do with the deepest yearning of the Self which is required to be in evidence before any conversation regarding the ultimate Reality can be initiated. The paradox, and the 'unknowable' Texts, by helping to stir the hidden yearning for knowledge in man, become indicative of the dimension of Grace (*prasāda*) without which not even a minimal sense of separation from the not-self can take place :

He is to be attained only by the one whom the
(Self) chooses. To such a one the Self reveals
his own nature.⁶

The main point which emerges clearly from a reading of the Texts is that Brahman-knowledge is a response to a seeking, a seeking which transcends the demands of the world.

2. *Chh. VII. 1.1-5.*

3. *Maitreyi Upaniṣad*, I. 1-15.

4. *Kaṭha. I. 3 ff.*

5. *Praśna Upaniṣad* I. I. ff.

6. *Br. II. IV. 1-14.*

6. *Yameveiṣa vṛṇute, tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm syām. Kaṭha. I. 2. 23.*

This can be seen from the initial reluctance on the part of the Teachers to impart their knowledge unless convinced of the pupil's dissassociation with the world. In some cases the pupils are held off by promises of earthly riches,¹ but those who persistently return again and again to the posing of the crucial question regarding *ātman* and Brahman, do in the end qualify themselves for enlightenment.²

The question to be considered now is, what is the nature of this Brahman? The Text cannot take recourse to paradoxes here because the seeker is already awakened to the fact of the desirability of this Supreme Knowledge. The Sruti therefore gives a positive definition of Brahman, or that is what it looks like at first glance :

Brahman is of the nature of Reality, Consciousness, Infinity. (Tait. II. 1.)

Samkaracarya points out that no definition as such is possible of Brahman because it is the One Reality which can have neither a higher genus nor a distinguishing quality which would differentiate it from other items of like nature, as for example the term 'a blue lotus' identifies the object as lotus and distinguishes it from other pink or yellow coloured lotusses. The above Text, therefore, should not be construed as a definition but as indicative of characteristics.

C. The Difference Between Definition and Characterisation :

The line of tradition started by Samkaracarya has given great thought to this question of the characteristics of Brahman. Brahman being Ultimate reality no definition is possible and on this account it is called as being beyond speech etc. There is however an oblique way of referring to this foundational reality. This is to give it such characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*) as would differentiate it from all else, but

1. *Naciketa* in *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*, I. 1 ff.
2. The story of six ascetics is related in the *Pruṣnopanīṣad* I. 1, ff, they are required to abide in the forest retreat for lengths of time before the Teacher undertook to answer the questions put by them.

not subsume it under another; neither should the characteristics determine the nature of Brahman as is done by the qualities (*guṇa*) which qualify objects, as for example, 'a blue lotus', where blueness is seen to inhere in the object 'lotus'.

The characteristics are of descriptive value only; these descriptions are further divided into two groups. Some descriptions touch the periphery of the matter alone, whereas some characteristics refer to the essence of the thing itself. As regards Brahman, the Vedānta tradition considers such characteristics as 'cause of the world' etc. as secondary characteristics (*ṭaṭastha*) and 'Reality, Consciousness, Infinity, as primary or essential characteristics (*svarūpa lakṣaṇa*).

Reality

Samkaracarya defines reality as that which does not change in its essential determinations, (*satyamiti yadrūpena yannīśchitam tadrūpaṁ na vyabhicarati tatsatyam*). If an object were to undergo changes, then these changes could not be essential to its nature. By the word Reality, the *Upaniṣad* seeks to establish the utter changelessness of Brahman. It may be said that the transformations are unreal but the substate is real, as for example, gold remains uniformly the same object, even when it assumes different shapes as ornaments. According to Samkaracarya, if we use this analogy here then Brahman would stand in the relation of material cause to the world, but this is untenable because Brahman is neither material nor cause of the world. In order to off-set the possibility of so understanding Brahman, the *Śruti* adds the word Consciousness to Reality.

Consciousness

Brahman is real and it is of the nature of consciousness, itself. The Text does not say 'Knower' but Consciousness or *jñānam*. If Brahman were to be knower, then the first word would qualify the second. In this phrase the three words together with Brahman have the same case

ending, which makes it clear that they should be individually employed with Brahman, as, for example, Reality is Brahman, (*satyam brahma*), Consciousness is Brahman (*jñānam brahma*), and Infinity is Brahman (*anantam brahma*). Moreover, Brahman cannot be designated as knower because the knower is one of a triad, that is, knower-known-knowledge. This diversification will take away from its changeless character of Reality on the one hand, and also from Infinity on the other. Brahman then is of the homogeneous nature of Consciousness which negates all possibilities of it being mistaken as the material ground of the world. The word Reality (*satyam*) used first ensures the 'beingness' of Brahman. It is not an ideality and it is not a material ground.

Infinity

The word Infinity signifies the unending nature of Reality and the non-intermittent character of Consciousness. Without the concept of Infinity the other two words would not repel the meanings which in general are given to them in ordinary discourse. In the words of Samkaracarya :

To say knowledge (is) brahman, is to give rise to the possibility of its being within limitations, because knowledge is thus experienced in the world; to negate this possibility the word Infinity is added.¹

All the three terms are independent of each other and yet they are related in the manner stated above. They enhance the meaning of each by negating the possibility of the opposite meaning being ascribed to them. These characteristics aimed at describing Brahman are to be understood as precluding the least trace of duality in the Ultimate Reality. In a way, then, these terms have a negative force rather than positive. It is, therefore, in accordance with the Text which states "from where speech turns back with the mind, being unsuccessful".²

1. Samkarabharya on Tait.II.I.I.

2. Tait.II.iv.

A question may arise here, if Samkaracarya is well within his rights to construe the above 'definition' of Brahman to signify a complete cessation of dualities. In the *Upaniṣad* itself there are further Texts which do not seem to accord with Samkaracarya's exegeses of these passages. In the 6th passage of the second chapter, the Text says regarding creation;

'I shall become many; He practised austerities;

Thereupon whatever is here He created.

After creating He entered into it.¹

It seems that the Text ascribes not only the function of creation to Brahman but the desire for creation; further, a contemplation of the function to be undertaken and lastly his own immanence in the world he had created. This seems to set aside the non-dual nature of Brahman. There is a separation here of the creator and the created, also in the creator himself, is a duality because he experiences a desire for creation, contemplates the action to be performed, engages in the action itself and participates in the work accomplished, in the mode of being immanent in it.

Samkaracarya in one of his most telling pieces of writing, in his usual and inimitable style of pleasant but profound (*prasannagambhīra*) prose, gives his own rendering of the above Text. The context of the above Text, he points out, is the persistent doubt in the mind of man regarding the actuality of Brahman. The Text is addressed to that state of doubt; it reminds man that the whole range of diversification must be the manifestation of something which underlies it and that this is Brahman. The 'desire' for creation, the 'contemplation' undertaken toward creation and 'creation', itself, are to be understood as the arising of manifestations; the dispersal of the appearances of Brahman. The freedom of the being-without-a-second cannot

1. Tait II. 6. *bahu syām prajāyeyeti. sa tapo' tapyata, Sa śāpastaptvā idam sarvaśrjat yadidamkimca. tatsrṣtvā tadēvanupra viśāt.*

be gainsaid by any desires for actions etc. This is more evident when we consider the Text : 'He entered into the creation'.

Samkaracarya reminds us that this passage comes at the end of the analysis of the five sheaths. The Self is said to reside in the inner-most sanctum of the heart. This Text may said to have concretised for the seeker the presence of Brahman within the texture of his being. It propounds the proximity and the accessibility of Brahman to every individual. The two phrases 'the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme' (*brahmavidāpnoti param*) and 'in that, he entered' (*tadevānuprāviṣat*) are to be understood in juxtaposition to each other. After all how can the individual soul 'attain' the Supreme ? The word 'attain', therefore, means a realization of identity rather than an achievement of possession. Similarly the word 'enters' (*anuprāviṣat*) signifies a presence within the grasp of human understanding. If the first is a point of rapprochement from the side of the Self (*tvam*) then the other is the descent of Brahman (*tat*) toward the same focal identity. In effect these are not two movements but just the one moment of realization. Samkaracarya refers to the story of the ten men, (*daśamastu*) to clarify his point about the coming together of the Self and Brahman in the same act of realization. Any language creating the impression of movement, or achievement etc. is inappropriate here. It is approximated most in the language of a recovery, a sudden realization of something which was already accomplished but somehow not experienced as reality. It is like the realization of the tenth man who was puzzled a moment ago and now everything is clear in a flash as it were. There is nothing new achieved here. He has not become the tenth man, he was already that, only he did not know that he was so. When the Teacher pronounces the identity of you (*tvam*) and that (*tat*) it is possible that such realization may take place and great joy by experienced.

Chapter Fourteen

On Ananda (Bliss)

Ānanda is the language of realization. In ananda, there is neither Self nor Brahman but it is one homogeneous, unbroken, undiversified joyousness (*akhandaikarasa*) which in its all-pervasiveness touches everyone. Every life is enriched to the extent it appropriates this delight of being.¹ The truth of this statement is the experience of every individual. Rather than sorrow, a delight in living is the fact of life. Sorrow is an aberration, a negation of the true form of life. Sorrow comes from the other, whereas delight is self-located. In the anxiety for the other, (also expectations from the other, hopes for the other, disappointments, bereavements, etc.) lies the fear which constantly haunts the natural surge of joy which is the nature of man. In this he is identical with Brahman the great reality and thus he in turn is in touch with the entirety of the world. Who can be an 'other' to him, who belongs everywhere because no one is without a spark of the delight of Brahman. To the expansive heart which can welcome the entire world and take delight in it, there can be no question of sorrow.

The question of *ananda* touches the real knot in the heart of man. One is not in doubt about the actuality of his own existence, and thus is able to imagine Brahman as *sat*. He is also conscious of himself and can understand the idea of *cit*; but *ananda* is so fragmented, so diffuse, so tenuous an experience in life that it is difficult to hold it together with the concept of the supreme Brahman. For

1. Tait. II. 7.

this reason, the tradition develops the view that *sat* and *cit* are revelatory of Brahman but *ananda* is the veil of concealment, but the veil is not any the less indicative of the presence of Brahman.

The term *ananda* is used as a synonym for *ananta* (infinity) of the definition, because that which is finite cannot be of the nature of bliss. Only the Infinite, where there is no trace of or shadow of the 'other' can be identified with supreme delight. The Upanishad says :

It is of the nature of flavour, on enjoying which (man) becomes supremely ecstatic.¹

To the pupil, then, is explained that in himself lies the actuality of that supreme happiness which in its intermittent and complex form is already experienced by him. He is required only to follow the Teacher in his enunciation of the nature of Brahman and his teaching that this Brahman in the form of the Witness — Consciousness lies hidden in the cave of his own heart. On the direct confrontation with this 'Man in the heart' who is the same as the 'Man in the Sun', everything is attained at once;² there is the utter tranquility of complete fulfilment, and the experience of Supreme Bliss of being Oneself.³

The Mode of Teaching by Example

The Upanishad does not propound any course of action to the student for the appropriation of the answers given at the end of the discourse. What is given is an example of an actual quest and subsequent fulfilment in Brahman-realization. This methodology, if it may be so called is common to the other Upanishads also. In the Upanishadic literature, myths and ancient legends are dimensions in the demonstration of truth, which although necessarily arising out of this world, seek to go beyond it. This final teaching forms the subject matter of the last chapter and is called *Bhṛguvalli*

1. Tait. II. 8.1.

2. Ch. I. 7.5.

3. Tait. III. 9.1.

because it relates to the quest and attainment of *Bhṛgu* for Brahman-knowledge. The teacher is his father the Lord of the Seas, Varuna. To *Bhṛgu* in answer to his question is given the famous Text regarding Brahman :

That from which everything emerges, by which they live and are sustained and into which they are dissolved, know that to be Brahman. ¹

The pupil is asked to contemplate this Text and discover its truth for himself. *Bhṛgu* then in his efforts to know Brahman goes through the five sheaths of ignorance successively. First he identifies Brahman with food. Surely, he meditates, it is food out of which everything comes, by which they live and are sustained and into which again they are transformed. Satisfied, he comes to his father to report his discovery of the truth. Varuna repeats his original statement, signifying thereby that the answer is not correct and that the pupil should renew his efforts toward knowledge. The Teacher patiently and sympathetically takes the pupil through the stages of his identification of Brahman with life, mind, intellect and bliss.

Bliss, as has been stated earlier, is the closest and yet the farthest off from Brahman. It is truly of the nature of Brahman, but not in its worldly frame of reference. It requires great courage to relinquish the obvious and concrete joys of the world for that plenum of bliss which would mean a total transformation. It is not the aim to be blissful or to be joyous, all of which are proximate to the ultimate state which is Bliss, itself. To be *ānandamaya* is still to remain under a trace of ignorance; the Text requires one to become of the nature of *ānanda* itself.

In pursuance of the final repetition of the statement *Bhṛgu* goes back to his life of contemplation and achieves the liberating knowledge of Brahman as *ānanda*. He knows Brahman as *ānanda*, *ānando brahmeti vyajānāt*.² He returns

1. Tait. III. 2-1.

2. Tait. III. 6. 1.

no more to the Teacher but goes around singing paens of joy celebrating his identity with the world and the delight of Supreme fulfilment. The presence of such a man of *ananda* amidst ordinary folk, would be a living source of inspiration, yet another link, in the continuing chain of Brahman knowledge.

The *Upaniṣad* then summarises its own teaching in this passage : The enquiry into Brahman knowledge begins with *Bṛhgu's* question and concludes with his realization of the *Varuṇa vidyā* (the teaching of *Varuṇa*). The discovery of the supreme knowledge which lies well hidden in the heart is the culminating point of the search for Brahman. Any person who proceeds in the same manner from the most gross to the subtle elements in his being will also realize this highest state and attain to the Bliss of Brahman-knowledge.

Words such as transformation, attainment, liberation, create an impression that the seeker after knowledge is lost to the world; this evidently is not so. The *Upaniṣad* very clearly describes the enriched life of this man who by his way of existence and his utterance out of the joyousness of his experience of fulfilment is of great benefit to his fellow men and perhaps continues to live in it in compassionate sympathy with the world. Thus we see that the *brahmavit* (Knower of Brahman) can be anybody anywhere, like the Emperor Janaka, or a sage like *Yajñavalkya*, or a woman like *Gārgi* or a youth like *Sanatkumāra*.¹ We see, therefore, that this teaching is highly selective and yet completely universal in that anyone may become a seeker (*jijñāsu*) and thus qualify himself as a suitable disciple for the lesson in Brahman-knowledge. Also, the question of the passage of time is not irrelevant to the issue. Dialogues regarding Brahman-knowledge necessarily must relate to specific situations; however, the dynamism required for adjusting with the march of time falls within the structure of created time. Reflective analysis and appropriation of the teaching which

1. Samkarabhasya on III. 10.5 "*lokānugrahārṥham*".

indicates the presence of Brahman as Bliss supreme is required on the part of the disciple. The disciple is required in every case to hearken, meditate and realize for himself the Truth and thus although he may belong to one particular time and place, he is in a position to overcome all such limitations,

The question of unbroken continuity of this tradition is necessarily related, therefore, to the mode of teaching envisaged in the Vedic literature. The definitive injunctions to be found in the Vedas pertain to life in the world and felicity after death. A good life on earth is necessary both for the attainment of heaven after death, as well as for an awakening toward *jijñāsa* (yearning for knowledge). Renunciation, then, forms the core of the Vedic tradition. Renunciation, to this way of thinking, is a dimension of knowledge, a power of discrimination between the changing world-order and that which remains hidden and unchanging. The enquiry into the ground of our being does not follow naturally from man's given status in the world. Without the Texts there would be no indication of knowledge of anything other than that which is given in our experience of the world. The emphasis on continuity, therefore, does not seek a perpetuation of meaningless reiteration of aging principles. The tradition seeks to preserve the purity of the indicators towards a life of blessedness because man, says *Śruti* is capable of attaining the highest knowledge.

We find in the Text of the *Taittiriya* a summation of all these themes, treated in an exemplary fashion. It preserves a well-knit unity of enquiry, knowledge and realization. It makes a beginning with the world and relates this knowledge back to the world in a special way because the man of enlightenment returns to the world speaking in joy of his 'discovery'.

Recapitulation

The Veda says :

The Self that is subtler than the subtle and greater than the great is lodged in the heart of (every) creature. A desireless man sees that

glory of the Self by the grace of the Ultimate One and thereby he becomes free from all sorrows.¹

The ontology of Bliss as Being itself is enunciated by the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. It teaches that in the heart of man Truth lies hidden overcast by veils of ignorance. By a mode of contemplative focussing on the problem of ignorance, the truth of the identity of the Witness-Self with Brahman may be realized, as was done by Bhrigu of ancient times. Thus we see that the Upanishadic literature, is preeminently devoted to the raising of questions. It delineates, it describes, it refers to, it characterises, the region in the proximity of the heart but it never circumscribes it in definitive language. The unspoken is always the root from where the relevance of the utterance must be understood. This is the secret of its continued relevance. It is not the answer which lends unity to generations of the same tradition; but it is the question which is held sacred and which exercises their innermost thinking.

The highest truth is preserved in concealment. There is no will to truth here or a rationalizing; what is sought to be preserved is the relevance of a yearning toward truth.

1. *Taittirīya-āraṇyaka* 10.10 (*Sūyāna-bhaṣya*)

Conclusion

If by conclusion is meant a definitive answer to a specific problem, then this book may only reiterate its plea for a greater understanding of the problem which it seeks to emphasize as being of paramount interest not only for the East but for the West as well. In this age of acceleration rather than progress all things are made possible in principle at all times. There are no concerns which are not global in their implications at this time. We have studied modernity and we find that the Western world is held in a tension between a sense of celebration of the great achievements of science and an anguish that it is treading a path of no return. We have seen also that the attempts at Westernization of the language of Advaita moved beyond the orbit of the traditional understanding of how life should be lived in the city as well as in the forest. Contemporary India in choosing the city certainly opted for 'what is pleasing' rather than 'what should be preferred'; but is it possible to speak of renunciation in a world which professes to make it possible for all men to find fulfilment in and not away from it?

Shall we say here, that *māyā* is exactly this predicament of remaining in thrall to the given order, with almost a metaphysical complacency regarding its ultimacy? Vedānta philosophy states that this is so, but also that the prefiguration for overcoming the jurisdiction of *māyā* is given in the transient experiences of pleasures in the world. It is said that one's existence (*sat*) and consciousness (*cit*) establish a continuum with Brahman. With bliss (*ananda*) we come to a separation of the realm of *māyā* and Brahman. There is no continuity in the experience of delight; each experience is a totality in itself. It leaves nothing behind to sustain it

from one moment of pleasure to another. It disappears without a trace, leaving a craving for yet another such experience. The real importance of pleasures in the world, therefore, lies in its focus on what precisely it is not. The fragmentation of delight inevitably must move toward completion and plenitude. Let the world therefore, be where it is (*astu samsāra eva*) because it alone can show the way to the Bliss of Being; but in forgetting the lesson to discriminate, we stand in fear of forgetting as well, the message calling us to a homecoming in *ananda* (Bliss).

Neo-Vedanta and Modernity

PART II

**THE
TAITTIRĪYAKA-VIDYA-PRAKĀŚAH**

**By
VIDYARANYA**

**With an Introduction, Explanatory Notes,
Translation and Text in Roman**



PART II

THE

TAITTIIRIYAKA-VIDYA-PHANASA

BY

VIJAYANANDA

With an Introduction, Explanatory Notes,
Translation and Text in Roman

INTRODUCTION

The study of a text in Sanskrit, written in the fourteenth century by an accredited exponent of Advaita,¹ is undertaken with a view to substantiating the main point of the book, presented earlier that contemporary academic interpretations of this school of thought are far removed from the hard core of classical exegeses on the subject. The present work of Vidyaranya is valuable as a normative interpretation recapturing the core of the tradition.

The work is of special significance because of the quality of its approach to the central teaching of the Upanishad on which it is focussed. The thinkers of this tradition in classical as well as in contemporary times² have generally

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1. Mahadevan, T.M.P., "Vidyaranya", *Preceptors of Advaita* (Secunderabad : Sri Kanchikamakoti Samkara Mandir, 1968) pp. 182-189.
 2. The easily available commentaries on the Upanishads of the traditional genre are as follows :
 - (i) *Karika* on the *Mandukyopaniṣad* by Gaudapada (C. 5th Century A.D.).
 - (ii) *Bhāṣya* on Ten Upanishads by Samkaracarya (8th Century).
 - (iii) *Dīpikā* on a few principal Upanishads and some minor ones by Samkarananda (14th Century) and Sri Narayana (C. 15th Century).
 - (iv) *Mitākṣara* on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and *Chhāndogya* by Nityanandasrama (20th Century).
 - (v) *Maṇiprabhā* on eleven Upanishads by Amardasa (20th Century).
 - (vi) *Bhāṣya* on all principal and a few minor Upanishads by Upanishadbrahmayogin (20th Century).

contented themselves by writing glosses on the works of the celebrated commentator Samkaracarya. What Vidyaranya has accomplished in the independent work (of which a relevant part is here translated and studied) is best described as a 'meta-commentary' being not a mere gloss on the existing commentary, but an independent exercise in interpretation of the Upanishads themselves, guided at every step by the turns in the commentary of Samkaracarya. In sum it may be viewed as the medieval counterpart of modern academic interpretations of the Upanishads *vis-a-vis* the exegesis of Samkaracarya. The difference, of course, is that it defines stringently the parameters of the tradition within which the interpretative task is to be accomplished.

From a perusal of this text, we see clearly that all fundamental tenets of Advaita had been crystallised into living precepts for its adherents by the time of its author, Vidyaranya. From this point of view also the book may be of some interest to us because the fourteenth century was marked by the growing influence of Muslim power in India. It is perhaps not too far-fetched to see some similarity between the historical background of Vidyaranya and that of the modern Indian scholars, who also were contending with an alien culture. It is interesting to note that the politically disturbed condition prevailing in his time finds no echo in his writings on the Vedanta. Is there a metaphysical basis for this interesting omission? One may well conclude that there is an obvious basis. Whatever the world was to Vidyaranya, the active and powerful minister, to him as the Vedantic thinker it remained the sphere of the not-self which was to be discriminated against as such by the seeker of Truth. The importance of this relevant point may become more clear if we take into account the meagre details of Vidyaranya's biography.

THE AUTHOR, VIDYARANYA

It may be said that in the fourteenth century, Vedic scholarship rose to a new pinnacle marked by the stupendous

annotative work of the great Sayana, without which much of the meaning of the ancient texts would be lost to us. Some scholars believe that Vidyarāṇya and Sayana are identical. One reason for this opinion is that Sayana's *bhāṣya* on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* is also known as the *Dīpikā* by Vidyarāṇya.¹ A. Mahadeva Sastry has translated the introductory portion of this *bhāṣya* as introduction to the Upanishad by Vidyarāṇya.²

The more prevalent view, acceptable to this philosophic tradition is that Vidyarāṇya and Sayana were brothers and the former may have written some parts of the *bhāṣya* on the Vedas. It is further believed that 'Vidyarāṇya' (lit. forest of learning) is the ascetic name of Madhavācārya, the very powerful minister in the Kingdom of Vijayanagar which came into existence under his aegis in 1336 A.D. History recognises him as a sage and scholar who guided two young princes in their campaigns against the Muslims and supported them when they re-established Hindu sovereignty over South India.³

Vidyarāṇya introduced many measures of good administration in the Kingdom and was a patron of learning, countenancing all shades of religious belief within his area of influence. After many years of successful ministerial rule, he elected to retire from public life. Impervious to the pleadings of his Royal proteges, he renounced the world when yet at the height of his worldly powers and became an

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1. *Kṛṣṇayajurvedīyam Taittirīyārṇyakam* (Anandasrama edition, 1969, vol. 36), p. 1.
 2. A. Mahadeva Sastry, *The Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (Madras : Samata Books, 1980). Also Vasudeva Sharma, Introduction to *Jīvanmuktiviveka* (Anandasrama Granthavali 20).
 3. *Advanced History of India*, K. A. N. Sastry and G. Srinivasacari (Bombay, Allied Publishers, 1971), p. 417.

ascetic.¹ He, however, gained greater renown as such, because he became the thirty-third occupant of the prestigious seat of Samkaracarya at Sringeri.² Thus we see that Vidyaranya was one of those preceptors who lived his teachings and so kept alive the tradition of discourses on the *Aupanishadam Puruṣam* (The One who is spoken of in all the Upanishads).³

It is, therefore, safe to conclude that Vidyaranya's construction of the Advaita is both authoritative and true to the heart of its teachings. He is accepted as an accredited spokesman for Vedanta by later scholars right up to the twentieth century.⁴ He is also accorded the highest respect, at present by all Vedantins belonging to the ascetic orders of India.⁵ Indeed the brothers Sayana and Vidyaranya seem to have been at the crossroads of Indian philosophic thought; their writings are important links joining the ancient heritage to the contemporary writings on the Vedanta.

A question seems pertinent to the issue here, namely, whether this lack of radicalization demonstrates a dearth of creative thinking on the part of those who sought to keep alive a tradition of the quest for knowledge as the highest aim in life. In other words, how should we understand

1. *Sri Pañcadaśī* by Vidyaranya, tr. (in Hindi) by Pitambar Pandit (Bombay : Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1897), Introduction, p. 10.
2. *Sri Pañcadaśī*, *op. cit.* p. 11.
3. Br. III. 9-26.
4. Mahadevan, T.M.P. *The Pañcadaśī* (Madras : Centre for Advanced study in Philosophy, 1975), pp. xv-xviii.
5. Maheshananda Giri : *Māṇṣollāsamādhurī* (in Hindi, Dakshinamurthi Math, 1961), p. 4.
Also : Swami Gangeshwarananda, *Samkṣepa Śāstrakam* (Varanasi : Udasina Sanskrit Vidyalaya, 1975), Introduction, pp. 19-20.

Vidyaranya's faithful rendering of the tenets of Advaita irrespective of the many insistent demands of the time upon him to which he did give his undivided attention as well ?

An attempt has already been made in the book to show that the above question is not in fact relevant to the issue. There is no tension between the world and the individual in Advaita. The opposition is only between the Self and its ignorance regarding its own nature. As long as man unaware of his truer identity continues to regard himself as a knower, a doer and a enjoyer, only so long may he relate himself to the world and his life may be described as one of being or living in the world. Teachers of Advaita in succeeding generations feel called upon to reiterate and explain again and again the possibility of sublating the sphere of ignorance which threatens to engulf the Self and keep it unaware of its true nature. Vedānta operates not within the polarity of the world and Self but rather within a dialectic, as it were, between yearning for self-knowledge (*vividiṣā*)¹, and self-realization (*anubhūti*). If there is no desire for knowledge, then the question of realization also does not arise. The world is, in fact, indispensable in the sense that it instigates the desire for knowledge. The role of Vedānta, therefore, is not only limited but highly selective also in that it addresses itself strictly to the one who has the call, i.e., one in whom has arisen longing for self-knowledge. Yet it is most universal, in that anyone irrespective of external considerations may have such a desire to know his self which remains hidden by the very thing which it illumines.

Just as green scum which is born out of water, hides it from view by covering it, so is the 'ātman' hidden by layers of the not-self which are its own projections.²

1. The expression *vividiṣā* (like *anubhūti*) is that of the Upanishads : Cf. Br. 4, 4, 22.
2. *Vivekacūḍamaṇi*, 151.

The objective in front of the Vedantic tradition, therefore, is to keep alive the spirit of intimate communication between teacher and pupils. Within this rubric, there is scope for the widest diversification. The questions and the answers that constitute the teaching will necessarily be different from one situation to another but the content of it transmitted through such a mode will remain the same. It will be the same in so far as Vedānta is but a reflective appropriation of what is understood as eternally revealed. The synoptic progression from age to age reflected in the transmission of doctrine by teaching (as embodied in treatises) is of a different order than the dynamism required for adjusting and moving with the times. In this context it is hoped that the study of Vidyaranya's commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* will be of some value to us as endorsement of what has been said earlier in Part I of this book. He was undeniably involved in the world for many years but the emphasis on *nyāsa* (renunciation) in his writings is also quite unmistakable.

THE ANUBHŪTIPRAKĀŚAH

In any historical survey of the writings on Advaita, Vidyaranya's *Pañcadaśī*¹ and the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-vārtika-sūrah*² would merit important places. The author's other writings also are well known and many of these have been published and translated into English as well.³ The text

1. *The Pañcadaśī* : tr. by Swami Swahananda (Madras, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1967).
Also : tr. by Hari Prasad Sastri (London, Shanti Sadan, 1965).
2. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-vārtika-sūrah* (Varanasi : Acyutagranthamala Series, 1941).
3. (i) *Sarva-Darśana-Saṁgraha* ; tr. by E. B. Cowell and A.E. Gough (New Delhi : Cosmo Publications, 1976).
(ii) *Dīg-Dīśya-Viveka* : tr. by Swami Nikhilananda (Mysore : Sri Ramakrishna Ashram, 1970).

under study is included in an anthology of commentaries, entitled *Anubhūtiprakāśah*.¹ This book has not been translated into any of the Indian languages or into English so far. Before we take up the study of the *Taittirīyakavidyāprakāśah*, which forms the second chapter of the anthology, we may consider the Title and the format of the anthology itself.

The word '*Anubhūtiprakāśah*' may be translated as 'The Exposition on Realization'. In other words, the title indicates that the contents will throw light on the nature of enlightenment. It is difficult to translate the word '*anubhūti*'. Already two words have been used, namely 'realization' and 'enlightenment'. We may also describe it as 'immediate awareness or insight', or 'an instant recollection'. This state of knowledge is said to be non-indirect (*aparokṣa*) as distinguished from direct (*pratyakṣa*) and indirect (*parokṣa*). We have direct knowledge of sensible objects and indirect knowledge about many matters through inferences or from scriptural authority. The non-indirect knowledge is a unique (and in the one ideal case, unparalleled) juxtaposition of two direct experiences where one is instantly cancelled by the other. The classical example which is cited in explanation of this knowledge is about 'the tenth man' (*daśamo'sti*).²

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- (iii) *Vivaraṇa Prameya Saṁgraha* : (Varanasi : Motilal Banarasidass, 1967).
- (iv) *Jīvanmuktiviveka* : (Anandasrama Sanskrita Granthavali no. 20), new numbering.
- (v) *Dīpikā on Nṛsimhottaratāpani Upaniṣad* (Anandasrama Sanskrit Granthavali no. 30). Old numbering.
- (vi) *Śrī Śankara Digvijayah* : tr. Baladeva Upadhyaya (Hardwar : Shri Sravannath Jnana Mandir, 1967).
1. *Anubhūtiprakāśah* (Bombay : Nirnaya Sagar Press, 1926)
 2. *Śaṅkarabhāṣya* on Tait. 11. 1; *Upadeśasūhasrī* 18, 172. Ten men are obliged to swim a river in the dark. Reaching the other shore, one of them takes a tally to see if anybody is missing. He counts nine and there is great anguish at the loss of one companion. A compassionate

Vidyaranya has also written a commentary on Samkaracarya's minor work *Aparokṣānubhūti*, in which he writes that this non-indirect knowledge is synonymous with Self-realization.¹ The Self is not directly perceived by the mind,² because the mind may not go further than the I-consciousness evident in the waking as well as dreaming states; nor is it to be inferred by reason, which could only start a process of infinite regress.³ Scriptural testimony can give indirect knowledge only which must be accepted to begin with, like the belief in heaven and hell, etc., but this is not experienced directly. Then how should the Self be known?

Samkaracarya's answer which has become classic in the tradition is that the Self is already known.⁴ It is known as the Witness-Self, which makes possible the phenomenon of the I or ego-consciousness, because there is memory of its continuity through the hiatus of consciousness in dreamless sleep.⁵ The ego-consciousness is subject, as Vidyaranya

passerby seeing their predicament, taps the shoulder of the man who is counting, saying, "You are the tenth man". There is great rejoicing at this 'recovery'. It is not that he did not know himself as a man or that he achieved a new status; but he was made aware by a 'teacher' that his state of loss itself was an error which being dispelled he could regain his original state of tranquillity.

1. Vidyaranya's *Dīpikā* on *Aparokṣānubhūti*, verse 2.
2. Tait. II.9.1.
3. Br. II.4.14.
4. Cf. his reference to Self as *pratyagātman* in his celebrated preamble to V. S. bh.
5. According to the *Upadeśa-sāhasri*. (1.2.93) Teacher to the disciple, "you contradict yourself by saying that you are not conscious (in deep sleep) when, as a matter of fact, you are so,.....For you deny the objects of knowledge (in that state) but not knowledge.....The

elaborates elsewhere¹ to three forms of mistaken identities which are called (1) natural, (2) due to past *karma* and (3) due to nescience. The proximity of the Witness-Self, so to speak, casts its reflection on the I-consciousness. Deluded naturally by this a man says 'I know', 'I enjoy'. The 'I-consciousness' is associated with a particular body due to past karmas, so a man says 'I am this body'. Due to nescience a man although conscious of the I as knowing, doing or enjoying is not aware of the Witness-Self. He evinces an awareness of it when he awakens from a dreamless sleep and says 'I did not know anything, I was happily asleep.'² This 'existence' which he implicitly asserts is due to the hidden Witness-Self which is the ground of all existence, knowing and feeling. It is the Witness-Self alone, which makes it possible for the 'I' to exist, know and enjoy.

This (Self) is the one unbroken witness of the dance of every intellect, verily, itself eternal, it views the passing without the act of looking as if through half-closed eyes.³

The dissolution of nescience is simultaneous with the realization of the Witness-Self which is of the nature of existence, consciousness, and bliss. This realization is called *aparokṣanubhūti*, that is, immediate experience of Truth.

consciousness owing to whose presence you deny the existence of things (in deep sleep) by saying, 'I was conscious of nothing', is the knowledge, the consciousness which is your Self." tr. by Swami Jagadananda (Madras, Sri Ramakrishna Math, 1975), p. 53.
Also : *Ātmajñānopadeśavidhi* IV. 9-10 & *Mānasollāsa* VI-21.

1. *Dṛg Dṛśya Viveka*, verse 8.
2. *Upadeśasūhasrī*, op. cit., p. 50 ff.
3. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* 2.58. Tr. by A. J. Alston; *The Realization of the Absolute* (London : Shanti Sadan, 1971).

The role of Vedānta is to throw light on the state of ignorance and indicate the way to knowledge¹. This is a crucial role because ignorance of The Self is not known as such but as knowledge which mistakes what is not self for the Self. In following the teachings of the Upanishads, the seeker of Truth is introduced to the idea of Witness-Self: How is he to discriminate between the Witness-Self and the layers of not-self? This he must learn from the Teacher. The reasonableness of this lesson being accepted (*yukti*), he must engage in meditative practices and prove to himself, the ultimacy of the Self by the experience of realization.²

All expository treatises on the Vedānta in general follow a similar pattern of exegesis and so many can be seen to uphold the adoption of *vividiṣā* (desire for knowledge) as the point of departure and *anubhūti* (realization) as its destined goal. The repetitive theme has gained in considerable clarity and depth in Vidyaranya's treatment of it in his *Anubhūtiprakāśah*. Separate commentaries on twelve upanishads have been subsumed under the rubric of this general theme.³ Each Section or Chapter is complete in itself with an opening verse and a concluding colophon. The author's selection of Upanishads is as follows:

1. *Aitareya* from *Rgveda*
2. *Taittirīya* from *Yajurveda*
3. *Chhāndogya* from *Sāmveda*
4. *Muṇḍaka* and *Praśna* from *Atharvaveda*
5. *Kauṣītaki* from *Rgveda*
6. *Maittrāyaṇi* from *Sāmveda*

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1. *Vedāntasūtra of Sadananda*, tr. by Swami Nikhilanand (Calcutta, Advaita Ashrama, 1974), p. 15.
 2. *Ātmajñānopadeśavidhi*, IV. 12-14, *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, 475.
 3. Pitambar Pandit, the well known commentator in Hindi on the *Pañcadāśi* (Bombay, Nirṇaya Sagar Press, 1897) mentions that *Anubhūtiprakāśah* consists of 3000 verses (p. 12). There are 2805 verses only in the available edition of the book at Visvanath Library, Lalita Ghat, Varanasi.

7. *Kaṭha* from *Yajurveda*
8. *Śvetāśvatara* from *Yajurveda*
9. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* from *Yajurveda*
10. *Talavakāṣa* from *Sāmaveda*
11. *Nṛsimhottaratāpāni* from *Atharvaveda*.

The list leaves out the *Iśopaniṣad*, a conspicuous omission noted by Max Mueller¹. The inclusion of *Nṛsimhottaratāpāni* also is unusual because it is generally not listed with the major Upanishads. It must be noted here that the tradition of Sanskrit scholarship is not guided by the historical method. Time also does not add anything to the venerability of a Text. In trying to recover the meaning of ancient treatises, scholars, follow the method of *mīmāṃsā*², that is, a co-ordinating assessment of the subject matter. Reverence, is therefore necessary for the guidance of reason in a sphere of understanding where the teaching is about the identity of *ātman* and *Brahman*. This unique subject-matter determines the status of a Vedic treatise as a Upanishad³; as such all are of equal importance for the seeker of Truth.

Vidyaranya, therefore, is well within his right to choose a selection of Upanishads for his purpose, which is to give the widest possible coverage to the Vedic traditions. In accordance with the method followed by Samkaracarya, the *Muṇḍaka* and the *Praśṇa* are treated in continuation and may be regarded as one; so the first five represent the teachings of the four Vedas. The last seven are selected from different recensions of the *Śruti* literature.

TAITTIRIYAKA-VIDYĀ-PRAKĀŚAH

The 'commentary' on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* is entitled *Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah*, that is 'the exposition of the teaching of the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*'. In 150 verses in the form

1. Mueller, Max, *The Upanishads* (New York : Dover Publications, 1962), Part I, PLXVIII.
2. Akhandananda Saraswati, *Muṇḍaka Sudha* (Bombay : Satsahitya Prakashan Trust, 1967) p. 10.
3. *Bṛhadāraṇyakavārtika-Sūrah*. I.3.

of couplets Vidyaranya has summarized mainly the second section of the Upanishad, adding a few verses for the first and the third sections. It is to be seen that almost all Upanishads propound the unity of the Self with Brahman in two ways, firstly by negation¹ and secondly by the mode of indicative descriptions². Both these methods are to be met with in the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*. Indeed this Upanishad is the fountainhead for both methods which converge to the same point in the famous declaration : 'brahmavidāpnoti param,' (Knower of Brahman attains the supreme)³.

The layers of the not-self which hide the Self are stated to be five and are described in the image of a bird in the Upanishad. A bird symbolises the flight from the earth to the skies, a soaring, an uplifting of the spirit toward the unknown. Another explanation is that in the Upanishadic tradition, the teaching is sometimes related to the Teacher, as for example, in the *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad* Brahman is described as four-legged. Similarly the *Taittirīya* originating from the Tittiri birds, as it were, is moulded in the imagery of a bird⁴.

The five sheaths are, the body, the vital air as breath, the mind, the intellect which is the consciousness of agency or will and lastly consciousness as enjoying. The first two are the material layers because the body and life-breath seem

1. 'Not this, not this' Br. IV 4.22, III. 9.26.
2. Ait. V. 3 (*prajñānam Brahma*) Ch. III. 14. 1 (*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*). Br. I 4. 10. (*brahma vā idamagra āsit*) *Kaṭṭha* 5.6. (*guhyam brahma sanātanam*) *Mund.*, 2.2.2 (*tadetadaksaram brahma*); *Māṇḍ.* 2. *ayāmatmā brahma*) etc.
3. Tait. II. 1.1.
4. Father Gispert-Sauch SJ, has perceptively detailed a parallel of the imagery for the bird with the Vedic ritualism of building an altar for sacrifice. He finds that the background of the *Taittirīya-Upanishad* lies in the sacrifice-rituals of the Vedas. *Bliss in the Upanishads* (New Delhi : Oriental Publishers & Distributors, 1977). pp. 21 - 37.

coterminous with the I-consciousness which is the shadow of the Self within us. The more subtle sheaths are (i) the world of mental projections, (ii) the sphere of action where changes are brought about and the 'I' knows itself as a 'do-er', (iii) the field of enjoyments (or pains) where the 'I' knows itself as the 'enjoyer'.

These are called sheaths or, 'coats'¹ which envelop the Self, that is, the self identifies itself with one or the other of these layers and does not know Itself as the supreme Brahman. The desire for this knowledge being awakened at the 'right' time the pupil is required to approach a teacher for instruction. This awakening or *vividiṣā* is indispensable, and the one and only instigation (*prayojaka*) toward a life of spiritual endeavour. All texts agree that the desire for knowledge comes to the man who is rich in qualities of the head and heart summarized as the four-fold scheme of good conduct² (*Sādhana catuṣṭaya*).

1. The term sheath (*kośa*) does not occur in this *Vallī*. It has been used by Samkaracarya in his commentary on II 2.1. He evidently has elaborated Gaudapada's usage of the word and reference to *Taittirīya* in *Māndūkyopaniṣad kārīkā* III. 11. The five sheaths are treated as such in *Sarvopaniṣad* 2. The symbolism of 'sheath' imparts the sense of concealment and implies the possibility of unsheathing i.e., unveiling of what lies hidden.
2. The four qualities given in *Vedantasāra* (op cit.) are as follows : (i) *Nityānityavastuviveka* (Discrimination between things permanent and transient). (ii) *ihāmutrārthapholabhogavirāgah* (renunciation of the enjoyment of the fruits of actions in this world and hereafter). (iii) *ṣatsampattiḥ* (to be possessed of six treasures, viz., *Sama-dama*, restrain in mental propensities and physical sense-organs; *uparati*, abstinence, *titikṣā* forbearance, *samādhāna*, tranquillity and *śraddhā* reverence), (iv) *mumukṣutva* (yearning for liberation or Self-realization) *Vedanta-sāra*, 14-25.

Vividiṣa, then, automatically must lead to *nyāsa* or renunciation, because the pupil being instructed by the Teacher, will be involved in meditative practices in order to bring his mind intellect and feelings to bear upon the teaching till he meets with success in the form of Self-realization. It could be asked why the yearning for knowledge together with the reading of the Upanishads, should not suffice for Enlightenment. This brings us to one of the main points of all writings on the Vedānta. It has already been said that the knowledge of Brahman reaches the dimension of 'non-indirect' knowledge, that is, a state where knowledge and experience are one. Heaven, etc. may be promised to man for good conduct, but this will always remain as far as the do-er is concerned in the realm of indirect knowledge (*parokṣa jñāna*); but in engaging in an existential dialogue with a preceptor who is *brahmavit* (knower of Brahman) he is in touch with the living pulsating sphere of bliss. It is the burning lamp which enkindles other lamps. A description of the lamp may be pleasing but it cannot light the way for the way-farer. We see, therefore that the living example of a Teacher runs like a thread through different Upanishads.

Specifically, the Teacher's role is to guide the seeker through his meditative investigation into the nature of the five sheaths. Starting from the outermost, that is, the body, the intellect must discard all layers as 'not this Self which is being meditated upon'. The last barriers are the three sheaths of consciousness, willing and feelings. Being in close proximity to the Witness Self, the intellect seems luminous by itself whereas this is reflected light only. The negative method teaches discrimination between the real Self and all that which appears real but is not so. What is being taught is not a denial of the not-self but rather a separation from it (*pṛthak sattā*). The basis for this distinction lies in the positive descriptions of Brahman and its identity with *ātman*. 'Brahman, is of the nature of 'Reality, Consciousness, Infinity',¹ Unspeakable Supreme Delight,²

1. Tait. II. 1.1.

2. Gauda 3.48.

'Unchanging, Immortal Delight and Fearless',¹ 'the One without a second',² 'all pervasive, consciousness, bliss and unparalleled',³ etc. If this supreme is the *ātman* itself, then the *ātman* cannot be identified with the body, life, breath, will or feelings or consciousness. So these outer coverings are to be discarded one by one till the *ātman* is revealed in its unique resplendent nature as Brahman.

Until the goal is reached, the seeker must follow a strict ethical code of conduct; but when he achieves the ultimate stage of Oneness, there are no duties or rights as such for him because there is nothing which is not He Himself.⁴ Moreover all virtues naturally accrue to him and all his actions are permeated by goodness.⁵ This is the final stage of celebration of the state of Bliss. At the end of his commentary on the *Taittirīyopaniṣad* Vidyaranya refers to the song of Self-realization by *Bhṛgu* in the third valli of the text. He concludes with a prayer to his Teacher 'the great Lord Vidyatirtha', invoking his blessings for all seekers of knowledge.

1. Br. 4.4.25.

2. Chh. 6.2.1.

3. Kaivalya 8.

4. "And no duty remains for a Yogin who has accomplished his object who is satiated by nectar—like wisdom; if there be, he is not the knower of the true nature of the Brahman". *Uttaragita* 23, tr. by S. V. Oka (Poona Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. 1957).

The *Gaudapādīya Dipikā* on this verse clarifies that the Yogin who is established in the one-flavoured Bliss does not engage in action for benefit to Society. *Uttaragita*, (Bombay Gujrati Press, 1912).

5. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, IV. 69.
Also, *Vedāntasūtra*, 224.

तैत्तिरीयक-विद्या-प्रकाशः

Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah

[1]

ब्रह्मवल्यां ब्रह्मविद्यां तिच्चिरिः प्राह यामिमाम् ।

वक्ष्ये सुखावबोधाय क्रीडन्त्वत्र मुमुक्षवः ॥ १ ॥

*brahma-vallyām brahma-vidyām Tittirīḥ prāha yāmimam |
vakṣyē sukhāvabodhāya kṛīḍantvatra mumukṣavaḥ ||*

This knowledge of Brahman, which has been described by Tittirī in the *Brahmavallī*, I shall state for its easy assimilation. May the seekers of Liberation disport themselves in it (enjoy the discourse).

In the opening stanza Vidyaranya gives a title to his work and declares his intention of commenting upon the second chapter of the Taittirīya Upanishad, namely, the *Brahmavallī*. Both Samkaracarya and Suresvaracarya have given importance to the First Statement of the *Brahmavallī*, as comprising the whole intent of the Upanishad.¹ Vidyaranya also treats this as the major statement and relates other teachings contained in the Upanishad to it as its corollaries; hence the importance of the *Brahmavallī*.

1. The name of the seer who is believed to have founded that Branch of Yajurveda to which the *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, belongs.
2. "*Sarva ēva vallyartho.....sūtritaḥ*", *Samkarabhāṣya* on Tait. II. 1-1, also *Vārtikam*, II. 43.

[2]

दर्शादिपितृमेधान्तैः कर्मभिर्बहुजन्मसु ।

अनुष्ठितैर्विविदिषा जायतेऽन्तिमजन्मनि ॥ २ ॥

darśadi Pitṛmedhāntaiḥ karmabhir bahujanmasu |

anuṣṭhitair-vividiṣa jāyate'ntima-janmani ||

By performing all enjoined rites from *darśa* to *pitṛmedha*,¹ ranging over many lives, (thereafter) is generated the longing for knowledge in the last birth.²

[3]

ततो योगं समभ्यस्य संहितोपासनादिभिः ।

ऐकाग्र्ये साधितेऽथास्य विद्यां सूत्रयति श्रुतिः ॥३॥

tato yogaṁ sambhyasya Samhitopāsanaḍibhiḥ |

ekāgrāya sādhitethāsyā vidyāṁ sūtrayati śrutiḥ ||

Thereupon, one-pointedness (concentration of the mind) being achieved by practising spiritual exercises and *upāsana* (worship) such as reading of Scriptures etc. (for him) the *Śruti* (Veda) aphoristically indicates the knowledge (of Brahman).

1. Fire-sacrifices enjoined on householders as dutiful conduct toward family and society. For details about *Darśapūraṇamāsa* offerings under different listings see Kane, *History of Dharmaśāstra* 11, pt. II p.p. 1297-98. Likewise for *pitṛmedha* performed as daily ritual see Kane, *Ibid.*, p. 748.
2. The desire for knowledge is itself an outcome of good conduct in life. Once the longing for the knowledge of Brahman is aroused, the seeker is led toward the goal of liberation by the grace of the Teacher, who will instruct him regarding spiritual exercises, meditation and discrimination. Liberation thus being assured the life in which the desire for knowledge is generated would be the last on earth.

In verses 2 and 3 the author mentions the qualities of the pupil who may approach the Teacher for knowledge of Brahman. The reference here is to the First Chapter of the Upanishad which has already described the sphere of work for the householder. The thirst for knowledge is the prime requisite for the seeker of Truth; this longing comes to those who have finished with the world as a necessary field of action. According to the author, therefore, the life of enquiry will turn out to be the last life before total freedom. There are parallel traditions which hold together a life of activity and the quest for knowledge as well;¹ but Vidya-ranya here clearly follows the Śaṅkarabhāṣya which says : "That man should attain the state of fearlessness (total freedom).....while the world (fraught with duality) abides for him, is utterly untenable."² Good conduct in the world therefore, would engender the desire for knowledge but it cannot bring about knowledge itself.

[4]

सूत्रात् पूर्वं शान्तिमन्त्रो जपायात्रोपवर्णितः ।

जपेन विघ्ना द्वेषाद्याः शाम्यन्ति मनसि स्थिताः ॥४॥

*sūtrāt pūrvam śhāntimanthro japāyātropavarṇitaḥ |
japena vighnā dveṣādyaḥ samyanti manasi sthitaḥ ||*

1. *Mīmāṃsaka Sūtra* I. ii. 1 and *Iśopaniṣad* 2, discussed in detail by Suresvaracarya, *Naiskarmyasiddhi*, 17-98. Also by Vidya-ranya in *Bṛhadāraṇyakavārtika sūrah* I.2.92-106.
2. *Śaṅkarabhāṣya* on Tait. II. 1.1.

Before the aphorisms, the peace-chant is here stated, for the purpose of repetitive practice (*japa*) (because) by its *japa* such obstructions as animosity etc. pervading the mind are eradicated.¹

The dialogue between the Teacher and the qualified pupil, starts with the recitation of the Peace-Chant. A discourse on Brahman is possible only under peaceful conditions, external as well as internal; the participants must be at peace with themselves and with each other and should be assured of being free from obstructions from outside. By referring to the Peace-Chant of the Upanishad the author situates himself and his reader within the tradition of dialogues on Brahma-vidyā. This repetition of the pattern is like the forging of another link to the chain of such discourses.

[5]

ब्रह्मवित् परमेतीति सूत्रं सर्वार्थसूचनात् ।

ज्ञेयं ज्ञानं फलं चेति सर्वेऽर्थाः सूचिता इह ॥५॥

brahmavit parametīti sūtram sarvārtha-sūcanāḥ |

jñeyam jñānam phalam ceti sarve'rthah sūcitā iha ||

1. The reference here is to the opening verse of the Upanishad, a peace-chant, seeking to invoke blessings on both Teacher and pupil, so that the dialogue on knowledge of Brahman may take place unhindered. This peace-chant is common to all the Upanishads of this branch of the Vajurveda namely :

“May Brahman protect us both (Teacher and pupil) together; may He sustain us both together; may we work together with great energy; may our study be vigorous and effective ; may we not wrangle with (hate) each other ; let there be peace (and) peace (and) peace.” Peace Chant : Tait. II.

The aphorism, "the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme"¹, (*brahmavit parameti*) being indicative of the entirety of meaning, namely, the object of knowledge, knowing and the result thereof, all these implications are indicated hereby.

This stanza refers to the opening aphorism in the Upanishad, namely, 'brahmavit āpnoti param', (the knower of Brahman attains the Supreme). Apparently there is an enumeration of a triad here, the knower, attainment, and Brahman as the Supreme, but in actuality there is the One only. Attainment is to be understood as realization on the part of the seeker of his own Brahmanhood, and as such it is not a case of becoming something which was not in existence before but merely a recollection of true identity.²

[6]

ज्ञेयं ब्रह्म तदीया धीर्ज्ञानं स्याद् ब्रह्मता-फलम् ।

सूत्रव्याख्यानरूपायामृच्येतद् विशदीकृतम् ॥६॥

jñeyam brahma tadīya dhīr-jñānam syād brahmatā-phalam |
sūtra-vyākhyānarūpāyam-acyetad viśadīkṛtam ||

Brahman is the object of knowledge, the intellect merged in Brahman is knowing, and (the attainment of) Brahman-state is its outcome. A detailed explanation of this is given in the stanza containing descriptive analysis of the aphorism.

-
1. This aphorism is from the First Statement of *Brahmavallī* : '*Brahmavid āpnoti param*', Tait. II. 1.1. (a).
 2. Tait. 1. 1 (a-g).

Vidyaranya takes the above interpretation for granted and proceeds onwards to clarify the triad in a different way. He identifies the knower with Brahman, so that the term 'brahmavit' stands for both; since the 'knower' would realize himself as Brahman and Brahman is to be propounded as the One unfragmented whole, No duality of the knower and the known is admitted here. So the triad is Brahman as object of knowledge, knowledge as realization, and the resulting experience of this realization. The author indicates that this triadic aphorism contains the full meaning of the entire First Statement, or rather the whole of the Upanishad itself. As this First Statement of the Second Chapter of the Upanishad is being elucidated by vidyaranya, it will be useful to quote it in full here :

- (a) The knower of Brahman attains the Supreme;
- (b) With reference to that very fact, it has been declared : Brahman is Real, knowledge, Infinite;
- (c) He who knows him treasured in the highest space in the cave;
- (d) (He) enjoys all pleasures simultaneously as the omniscient Brahman;
- (e) From that very Ātman space originated; from space, air; from air, fire; from fire; water; from water, earth, from earth, herbs; from herbs, food; from food, man; he indeed is this man consisting of food and rasa.

This indeed is his head, this, his right wing, this his left wing, this is his Self (the middle portion) and this is the tail (for) support.

This is the śloka (verse) on this subject.

(Taittirīyopaniṣad II. 1.1.)¹

In the aphorism 'brahmavit āpnoti param', according to Vidyaranya, is given the (1) subject of the discourse, (2) the means of acquiring knowledge regarding it, and (3) the gain accruing from this enterprise. Firstly, the identity of the 'brahmavit' (knower of brahman) and 'param' (the Supreme, that is Brahman) is the object of enquiry; secondly the mode of gaining this knowledge (āpnoti) is by discrimination between that which is real and that which is merely superimposed on it. Thirdly this text apparently goes beyond another which says "Anyone who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes Brahman indeed"² or "The knower of Brahman reaches Brahman"³. In describing the result of the knowing of Brahman, Vidyaranya emphasizes therefore the 'phala' or result as the third corner of the triad. He commences on the task of reducing this triad to the establishment of the One only by taking up the definition of Brahman given in the second verse of the First Statement or anuvāka. (Section b)

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1. The passage is sub-divided into sections here for easy reference.
 2. Mund. III.2.9.
 3. Kauṣītaki, 1. 4.

[7]

ज्ञातव्यं ब्रह्म यत्तत्किमिति चेत्तस्य लक्षणम् ।

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं यत् तद् ब्रह्मेत्यवगम्यताम् ॥७॥

jñātavyaṁ brahma yat-tat-kimīti cet-tasya lakṣaṇam |
satyaṁ jñānam-anantaṁ yat-tad-brahmetyavagamyatām ||

If (you are) desirous of knowing this object of knowledge, which is Brahman, know that to be Brahman which has the characteristics, Reality, Knowledge, Infinity.¹

[8]

आकाशादि जगत्सर्वमनृतं मायिकत्वतः ।

नानृतं ब्रह्म तेनैतत् सत्यमित्यभिधीयते ॥८॥

ākāśādi jagat-sarvamanṛtaṁ māyikatvataḥ |
nānṛtaṁ brahma tenaitat-satyamityabhidhīyate ||

Being illusory, the entire world consisting of space etc. is unreal². Brahman is not non-existent, therefore, it is indicated as Reality.³

1. The three characteristics separately are used throughout the Upanishadic literature for designating Brahman, namely, (i) Br. II. 1. 20, Ait. 1. 1. 1., Chh. 6. 2. 1; (ii) Ait. 5. 3, Br. IV - 3; Mund. II. 11-10; (iii) Katha 3. 15; Maitri 2. 4, *Bṛihadāraṇyaka* 2. 4. 12 etc. The three together as a description is unique to *Taittirīya*. In later works the description coalesces into one term, *Saccidānanda Brahman*, mostly used for God : *Ramottaratāpani*, 47 ; *Nṛsimhottaratāpani*. 7 The use of it in secondary literature is too profuse and well-known to be cited here.
2. The category of the 'illusory' defined *infra* under verse 11 is here distinguished from the 'unreal' while also identified ontologically speaking. Cf. *Vidyaranyas*.

[9]

जगज्जडं स्वतःस्फूर्तिराहित्याद् ब्रह्म तु स्वयम् ।

स्फुरतीत्यजडं तेन ज्ञानमित्यभिधीयते ॥९॥

jagaj-jadam svataḥ sphūrtirāhityād brahma tu svayam |
sphuratītyajadam tena jñānam-ityabhidhīyate ||

The world not being pulsating is material. Brahman being self-vibrant is not material, therefore, it is called (It is of the nature of) Knowledge.

[10]

जडं घटाद्यन्तवत्स्याद् देशकालादिवस्तुभिः ।

न देशादिकृतोऽन्तोऽस्य ब्रह्मानन्तं ततः स्मृतम् ॥१०॥

jadam ghaḍadyantavat syad deśakalādivastubhiḥ |
na deśadikṛto'nto'sya brahmānantam tataḥ smṛtam ||

Material things (such as) pots etc. being limited by space, time, objectness, and so on, are finite. Since Brahman is not limited by space etc., It is stated to be Infinite.

What, then is this Brahman? It is Real. It is Knowledge, It is Infinite. These words are not adjectives qualifying a substance, but they are characteristics by which one may recognize that which is indicated by them. In stanzas

distinctions elsewhere regarding *māya* for the man in the street, for the logician and for the follower of scripture, *Pañcadaśī* VI. 130.

3. The term Reality means that which is never sublated and remains always as it is. Lest it be mistaken as something unmoving, static and therefore material, the next verse proceeds to describe it as knowledge.

8, 9 and 10, the author explains that the Real or Reality means not non-existent, Knowledge means it is not a material thing and Infinite means it is an unfragmented whole. The three limitations with which we are familiar in the world, time, space and thing-hood, are in-operative with regard to Brahman, therefore it is said to be Infinite.

[11]

देशकालाद्यन्यवस्तुत्रयं मायाविजृम्भितम् ।
ब्रह्म सत्यं मायिकैस्तैः परिच्छिन्नं कथं भवेत् ॥११॥

deśakālādyanya-vastutrayaṃ māyā-vijṛmbhitam ॥
brahma satyaṃ māyikaistaiḥ paricchinnaṃ katham bhavet ॥

The three (limitations) space, time and the other one viz objects are the emanations of māyā¹. Brahman is Reality. How can it be limited by those illusory emanations ?

[12]

जडानृतपरिच्छिन्नव्यावृत्त्यैव पदत्रयम् ।
लक्षकं स्यादखण्डस्य यत्तद् ब्रह्मेति बुध्यताम् ॥१२॥

jaḍānṛta-paricchinna-vyāvṛtityaiva . padatrayaṃ ॥
lakṣakam syādakhaṇḍasya yat-tad-brahmeti budhyatām ॥

The three terms (Reality, Knowledge, Infinity) being free from materiality, falsity and fragmentation, are indicative of the part-less whole which should be understood as Brahman.

1. The word māyā is used to signify an order of existence which is neither true nor false, namely, an 'illusion'. Something is experienced, which cancels itself to reveal its real prop, as it were. The classical example is the

To the very relevant question implied here as to the nature of the visible world which is experienced in time, space and as objects, Vidya-ranya replies that it is due to 'māyā'. The word 'māyā' does not occur in the Text. Moreover the process of creation seemingly reads like an actual process in time. (See e). The answer given is, that, if this were indeed so understood then the rest of the Upanishad would become meaningless, because the later statements are devoted toward cancelling the world from the very gross to the most subtle. The Upanishad is going to teach the cancellation of the sheaths or layers of false identifications which prevent the Self from knowing itself as Brahman. Therefore, this apparent creation is like a magic show due to 'māyā'.¹ Brahman remains untouched by the name-form creations of 'māyā'. This simultaneous event of cancellation and revelation is what is implied in the conceptualisation of 'māyā' and its emanations. The concept of 'māyā' as developed by Samkara and his school is accepted here by the author.

illusion of a snake in a piece of rope. On perceiving the snake, there may be reactions of fear etc., but on the cancellation of the illusion the true nature of the rope is revealed. *Mayā*, therefore, performs a dual role of hiding the real as well as projecting the unreal. Compare DDV, 13: Two powers, undoubtedly, are predicated of *Mayā*, viz., those of projecting and veiling. The projecting power creates everything from the subtle body to the gross universe.

1. See Verse 35 of Text.

[13]

तादृग् ब्रह्मं कथं विद्यादिति चेदभिधीयते ।

गुहायां परमे व्योम्नि स्थितं ब्रह्म तु वेद यः ॥१३॥

*Tadr̥g br̥hman katham vidyāditi cedabhidhīyate /
guhāyām parame vyomni sthitam brahma tu veda yaḥ //*

If it is said 'how to know Brahman of that nature ?'
Then whoever knows Brahman dwelling in the supreme sky
of the cave (really knows).¹

[14]

देहादभ्यन्तरः प्राणः प्राणादभ्यन्तरं मनः ।

ततः कर्ता ततो भोक्ता गुहा सेयं परंपरा ॥१४॥

*dehādabhyantaraḥ prāṇaḥ prāṇādabhyantaram manaḥ /
tataḥ kartā tato bhoktā guhā seyam paramparā //*

Within the physical body is the vital air ; internal to the
vital air is mind ; still within is the doer (intellect) then
the enjoyer. This succession is the cave.²

1. Tait. II. 1. 1.

2. *The Pañcadasi*, in one similar (III. 1) and one identical
śloka (III. 2) describes the cave of sheaths :

(i) It is possible to know Brahman which is "hidden in
the cave", (i. e. of the five sheaths) by differentiating
It from them. Hence the five sheaths are now being
considered. (III. 1).

(ii) Within the 'physical sheath' is the vital sheath',
within the 'vital sheath's is the mental sheath' or
the 'agent sheath', and still within is the 'blissful
sheath' or the enjoyer sheath'. This succession (of
one within the other) is the 'cave' (that covers the
Atman). III - 2. Tr. by Swami Swahananda
(Madras : Sri Ramkrishna Math, 1967).

A question may be raised here as to how this Brahman is to be known at all. If it is Infinite and beyond all modes of thought etc., and veiled by 'māyā' then how should its reality become a matter of fact to knowledge? The solution to this problem is said to be given in the third verse of the First Statement (Sec e). This verse is construed by Samkaracarya to mean the establishment of Brahman as the innermost, indubitable 'atman' itself. The 'atman' is situated within the 'heart' of man, as it were, so that by this verse is established its immediacy.¹ This identification of 'atman' and Brahman, according to Vidyaranya is the object of knowledge, already indicated by the term 'brahmavit' (the knower of Brahman) of the aphorism. The Text of the Upanishad states that Brahman lies hidden in the cave of the sky, veiled by nescience. The concept of the 'cave' is common to the Upanishads.² According to Samkaracarya the idea of the cave signifies the intractable and impenetrable barrier of the intellect which refuses to go beyond the I-consciousness.³

[15]

पञ्चकोशगुहायां यदज्ञानं कारणं स्थितम् ।

तद्व्योम परमं तस्मिन्निगूढं ब्रह्म तिष्ठति ॥१५॥

-
1. *Śaṅkarabhāṣya* on Tait II. 1.1c See also *Suresvara Vārtikam* II. 80.
 2. *Kaṭha* I. 14, II. 12; *Muṇḍ.* 2. 1. 10, *Mahanārāyaṇīya* 2. 4., etc.
 3. *Śaṅkarabhāṣya* on Tait. II. 1-1.

*Pañca-kośa-guhāyām yadajñānam kāraṇam sthitam |
tad vyoma paramam tasmīn nignāham brahma tiṣṭhati ||*

Nescience (is to be known) as cause residing in the cave of five sheaths which is the supreme sky wherein dwells Brahman well hidden.

[16]

जीवचैतन्यमेवात्र निगूढमिति चेत्तदा ।

तस्यैव ब्रह्मतां विद्याज्जीवत्वभ्रान्तिहानये ॥१६॥

Jīva caitanyam-evātra nigūḍham-iti cet-tadā |

tasyaiva brahmatāṁ vidyājjivatva-bhrānti-hānaye ||

If it is so understood that consciousness itself is here hidden in the creature then consider its Brahmanhood (that it is of the nature of Brahman) for the removal of the illusion of creaturehood.¹

The innermost recesses of the cave is surrounded by grosser and still grosser layers of the not-self called sheaths. The space within the heart is the same as the supreme sky where Brahman as Self lies hidden, and where the last obstruction (to realization) in the form of nescience, the root cause of all projections, is to be encountered. Vidyanaraya has followed the lead of Sankarabhāṣya for this interpretation. Samkara-carya writes :

It is reasonable that the space as heart should be the supreme sky because it is

1. The *Jīva*, the Locus of I—consciousness is described as 'creature' in the sense of one devoid of freedom or lordship. The Upanishadic synonymus used for it are *aniṣa* (non-lord), *paśu* (one that is tethered and therefore restricted in its freedom).

intended here that the (significance of the) supreme sky should be part of the knowing process (being described here) In this space of the heart is the cave of the intellect where Brahman lies hidden, that is, It is known as different from the sphere of the intellect, otherwise Brahman is not related to any particular space or time as It is all-pervasive and totally unqualified.¹

[17]

स्वतो ब्रह्मैव चैतन्यं जीवत्वं प्राणधारणात् ।

कोशतादात्म्यविभ्रान्त्या मात्स्यस्य प्राणधारणम् ॥१७॥

*svato brahmaiva caitanyam jīvatvaṁ prāṇa-dhāraṇāt /
ko a-tā-tātmya-vibhrāntyā bhā'yasya prāṇa-dhāraṇam //*

In itself Brahman is consciousness. (Its) creaturehood is due to assuming life. Due to the illusion of identification with the sheaths (It) appears as assuming life (living).

'Māyā' hides Brahman by creating the falsehood of I-consciousness. Initially the pupil is obliged to begin here because consciousness is the last undeniable self-identity for him.

The author concedes the point that one may begin by thinking of Brahman residing inside as I-consciousness; that is, a duality of creaturehood and the Supreme as the in dwelling Lord within. This knowledge is tentative and needs to be overcome by the mode of discrimination about to be propounded by the Upanishad. Self-discipline and

1. *Śaṅkarabhaṣya* on Tait. II. 1-1.

yoga are required for a turning around from the world to the dimension of deeper understanding. The seeker with his eyes turned inward may begin on the task of recovering his Self from its dispersal amongst the layers of not-self. This may be named the meaning of the term 'āpnoti' of the aphorism.

[18]

वक्ष्यमाणविवेकेन तत्तादात्म्यमपोह्यते ।

ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कृतिस्त्वीदृग्बोधेनैव न चान्यथा ॥१८॥

*-vakṣyamāṇa-vivekena tat-tadātmyamāpohyate |
brahma-sakṣātkṛtis-tvīdṛg-bodhenaiva na cānyathā. //*

That identification is dissipated by the discrimination being propounded (here). By such knowledge alone comes the realization of Brahman as immediacy and in no other way (is this possible).

Discrimination necessarily is an intellectual process. By this meditative analysis the seeker is required to grasp the inescapable nature of immediacy which belongs with the knowledge of 'ātman' or Self.

[19]

बाह्यं जगत्पञ्चकोशांश्चापोह्यन्तर्मुखास्य धीः ।

ब्रह्म साक्षात्करोत्येव सर्वोपाधिविवर्जितम् ॥१९॥

*Bāhyaṃ jagat pañca-koṣāṃścāpohyāntarmukhāsya dhīḥ |
brahma sakṣāt-karotyeva sarvopādhi-vivarjitam //*

Eliminating the external world and the five sheaths (the seeker's) inward-turned intellect does indeed see (realise) Brahman who is devoid of all determinations.

The five sheaths are described in detail later in verses 41-86. These levels are the dimensions of not-self against which discrimination is to be used.

[20]

सोपाध्येव बहिर्दृष्ट्या भाति ब्रह्म न तावता ।

अपैति जीवता तस्मादन्तर्दृष्ट्यैव बुध्यताम् ॥२०॥

Sopadhyeva bahir-dṛṣṭyā bhāti brahma na tāvatā |

apaiti jīvata tasmād-antardṛṣṭyaiva budhyatām ||

To the outward-turned vision, Brahman appears with determinations only (therefore) it cannot dissipate (the sense of) creaturehood; understand, therefore, by the inner vision only creaturehood is dissipated.

[21]

बहिर्दृष्टिर्जगद्भानं तस्य सत्यत्वधीरपि ।

विवेकात्सत्यताऽपैति जगद्भानं तु योगतः ॥२१॥

Bahir-dṛṣṭir-jagad-bhānam tasya satyatva-dhīrapi |

vivekāṭ satyatā'paiti jagad-bhānam tu yogataḥ ||

The outward-turned vision consists of world-appearance and also the intellection of its reality. By discrimination is removed the (false) reality of the world; by yoga is removed the world-appearance.

Intellectual appreciation of the fact of falsity is not enough, but meditative practices and spiritual disciplines are required. By thinking one may not remove the world which is an experiential reality for us. An experiential realization of the One Reality alone may dissipate the sphere of not-self. 'Yoga' therefore, is necessary for bringing about the possibility of this realization.

[22]

बहिर्दृष्टावपेतायामन्तर्दृष्ट्या यदीक्ष्यते ।

निगूढं जीवचैतन्यं तद्ब्रह्मेति प्रपश्यति ॥२२॥

bahir - dṛṣṭāvapetayamantar-dṛṣṭyā yadīkṣyate /
nigūḍham jīva-caitanyaṁ tad brahmeti prapaśyati //

On the removal of the outward-turned vision, that which is seen by the inward-turned vision is the treasured mysterious I-consciousness which is seen as Brahman.

[23]

दृष्टे तस्मिन्परप्राप्त्या विदुषोऽतिशयोऽत्र कः ।

इति चेद्युगपत्सर्वकामाप्तिरधिका भवेत् ॥२३॥

dṛṣṭe tasmin paraprāptyā viduṣo'tiśayo'atra kaḥ /
iti ced-yugapat-sarvakāmāptiradhikā bhavet //

On its being seen, if it is asked 'By the gain of the Ultimate, what is (so) special (unique) on the part of the knower; then achievement of all fulfilment simultaneously would be the speciality.¹

What is the result of this self-realization ? The result is unique and unparalleled, namely, the attainment of all desires, totally and simultaneously. The realization of Brahman is the attainment of 'param' which therefore can be nothing else than supreme Bliss. This statement of about the result of Self-realization also answers the implied question, "Why should anyone desire to turn away from the world ?" The answer given is, since everyone desires pleasures, why should he not be interested in a course of action

1. Tait. II-1.1d.

which results in total fulfilment, a state of bliss, when all desires are satisfied simultaneously ?¹

[24]

काम्यन्ते विषयानन्दाः निखिलैः प्राणिभिः सदा ।

ब्रह्मानन्दस्य ते सर्वे लेशा इत्यपरा श्रुतिः ॥२४॥

*kamyante viṣayānandāḥ nikhilaiḥ prāṇibhiḥ sadā |
brahmānandasya te sarve leśa ityoparā śrutih ||*

All living creatures forever desire pleasures (arising out) of objects. All these object-pleasures are impressions only of the Bliss of Brahman—this is stated by a different Text.²

[25]

आनन्दहेतवो बाह्या विषया इति विभ्रमात् ।

कामयन्ते बहिर्दृष्ट्या विषयान् प्राणिनोऽखिलाः ॥२५॥

*ānandahetavo bāhyā viṣayā iti vibhramāt |
kāmayante bahir-dṛṣṭyā viṣayān prāṇino'khilah ||*

'The external objects are sources of bliss' : On account of this illusion, all living beings by (their) out-ward turned vision desire objects.

The quest for pleasure is quite inescapable and yet bliss is unrealizable in the world, but not so in life. The finitude of fragmentary pleasures can be made whole and complete in the bliss of Brahman.

[26]

अभीष्टविषये लब्धे धीः प्रत्यावृत्त्य हृद्गतम् ।

ब्रह्मानन्दं क्षणं भुक्त्वा बाह्यं कामयते पुनः ॥२६॥

1. *Śaṅkarabhāṣya* on Tait. II. 1. 1d.

2. Br. IV.3.32.

*abhiṣṭa-viṣaye labdhe dhīḥ pratyāvṛtya hṛdgatam |
brahmānandaṃ kṣaṇaṃ bhuktvā bāhyaṃ kāmāyate punaḥ ||*

On realizing its desired object the intellect returning, enjoys the Bliss of Brahman for a moment in the heart, and (after that moment) again begins to yearn for the external:

[27]

क्षणिकत्वान्न शतास्य पूर्णस्याऽप्युपचयंते ।

विषयानन्दता भ्रान्त्या ब्रह्मानन्दो हि वस्तुतः ॥२७॥

*kṣaṇikatvān-leśatā'sya pūrṇasyāpyupacaryate |
viṣayanandatā bhrāntyā brahmānando hi vastutaḥ ||*

On account of momentariness transience (of Bliss) is imposed even on this perfection. Pleasure in object is due to illusion; in fact there is only the Bliss of Brahman 1

All pleasures in the world are mere traces of the plenum of bliss in Brahman; due to ignorance one thinks of objects as sources of pleasure.

Knowledge of Brahman, therefore, means to be established in the bliss of Brahman.

[28]

अन्तर्दृष्ट्या विवेकी तु ब्रह्मानन्दं सदेक्षते ।

अन्तर्भवन्ति क्षणिकाः सर्वे तस्मिन्निरन्तरे ॥२८॥

*antar-dṛṣṭyā vivekī tu brahmānandaṃ sadekṣate |
antar-bhavanti kṣaṇikāḥ sarve tasmin-nirantare ||*

The discerning one, verily, with inward-turned vision continually contemplates that Bliss of Brahman. All momentary (experiences of Bliss) merge into that continuity.

-
1. Brahman as *ananda* is stated in many Texts : Tait. II. 4.1., II.5.1, II.7.1, III.6.1. ff. Br., II.1.19, II.4.11; etc. *Maitrī*, 6.13, *Kaivalya* 15, *Mahānārāyaṇīya* 23.1, *Kauṣītaki* 3.8. etc.

[29]

तत्त्वविद्ब्रह्मरूपेण सर्वान् कामान् सहाश्रुते ।

इत्येषोऽतिशयो ब्रह्मप्राप्तिरूपं फलं श्रुतम् ॥२९॥

tattvavid-brahmarūpeṇa sarvān kāmān sahāśrute /
ityeṣo'tiśayo brahma-prāptirūpaṁ phalaṁ śrutam ॥

The knower of Reality simultaneously enjoys all desires in the form of Brahman; (we have) heard of this special gain in the form of the attainment of Brahman.¹

The description of the triad mentioned by the author in Verse 6, namely, Brahman as object of knowledge, knowledge, and the result of knowledge is completed here.

[30]

सूत्रव्याख्यानरूपायामृच्यनन्तमितीरितम् ।

तदानन्त्यप्रसिद्धयर्थं जगत्कारणतोच्यते ॥३०॥

sūtra-vyākhyāna-rūpāyam-ṛcyaṇantamīritam /
tadānanta-prasiddhyartham jagatkāraṇatochyate ॥

(Brahman) is stated to be Infinite in the explicative verse of the aphorism.² World-causality is stated for its being renowned as Infinite.

After thus explaining the aphorism, Vidya-ranya takes up for consideration the process of creation and its subsequent cancellation. The visible world is only an appearance of Brahman, skillfully and magically presented by 'māyā'. World causality is imputed to Brahman to demonstrate that Brahman is Infinite. Brahman may share 'reality' and 'knowledge' with its many manifestations but as Infinite it supports the entirety of creation but is not limited by it.

1. Tait. II. 1.1d.

2. Tait. II.1.1.b-e.

[31]

यत्सत्यं ब्रह्म कोशाख्यगुहायां व्योमनामके ।

अज्ञाने कारणे गूढं तस्मादाकाश उद्गतः ॥३१॥

*yatsatyam brahma kośākhyā-guhāyām vyomanāmake /
ajñāne kāraṇe gūḍham tasmādākāśa udgataḥ //*

The Real Brahman which is hidden in nescience as cause in the cave entitled sheath, know as the supreme sky, from that (Brahman) emanates space (ākāśa).

The term 'ākāśa' (space) has been mentioned in many Texts as the first evolute and thus Brahman Itself¹ : In this Upanishad as well as others, the supreme sky is identified with the space in the heart, a statement construed to mean the immediacy of Brahman as 'ātman', the innermost Self.²

[32]

खंवायवग्निजलोव्योषध्यन्नदेहेषु कारणम् ।

पूर्वं पूर्वं भवेत्कार्यं परं परमितीक्ष्यताम् ॥३२॥

*kham vāyavagni-jalorvyoṣadhynna-deheṣu kāraṇam /
pūrvam pūrvam bhavet kāryam param param-itīkṣyatām //*

It should be understood that amongst (in the series of) space, breath, fire, water, earth, herbs, grains and body, the former is cause and the latter is effect.

All effects are grounded on Brahman as cause. Brahman as Ultimate Cause remains Infinite because it is unfragmented by space which is an emanation and so on, all along the series.

-
1. Chh.I. 9-1; Br. III. 9. 13; III. 9.13; Tait. III.10.3; Nris. 3.1; etc.
 2. Gaud.1-2; Maitri. VI.28; Br. II. 1-17; Chh.III. 12.9. etc.

[33]

इन्द्रो मायाभिरभवद्बहुरूप इति श्रुतेः ।

आसन्मायिकरूपाणि खादीनि ब्रह्मगानि हि ॥३३॥

indro māyābhir-abhavadbahurūpa iti śruteḥ |

āsan māyikarūpāṇi khādīni brahmagāni hi ||

‘Indra became multiform through māyā’¹; (we know) from this Text these illusory manifestations of space etc. arise out of Brahman alone.

[34]

परास्य शक्तिर्विविधेत्येवं श्रुत्यन्तररेणात् ।

विविधा ब्रह्मणः शक्तिः सा च मायानृतत्वतः ॥३४॥

parāsyā śaktir-vividhetyevam śrutyantareraṇāt |

vividhā brahmaṇaḥ śaktiḥ sā ca māyānṛtatvataḥ ||

From another Text ‘Its (Brahman’s) transcendental power is many-faceted’² (is known that) Brahman has multiform power and on account of falseness it is māyā.

[35]

सत्यस्य ब्रह्मरूपत्वाच्छक्तेरनृततोचिता ।

निस्तत्त्वा भासते याऽसौ माया स्यादिन्द्रजालवत् ॥३५॥

satyasya brahmarūpatvāc-chakter-anṛtatocitā |

nistattvā bhāsate yā’sau māyā syād-Indrajalavat ||

Reality being the nature of Brahman, the falsity of powers is appropriate. That insubstantial (entity) which appears (substantial) is māyā (performing) like a magic show.

1. Br. II. V-19

2. Śvetās. 6. 8.

[36]

मायाया विविधत्वेन तस्याः कार्येषु खादिषु ।

नामरूपेभ्यर्नेकत्वं भात्यन्योन्यविलक्षणम् ॥३६॥

*māyāya vividhatvena tasyāḥ kāryeṣu khādiṣu |
nāmārūpeṣvane'katvaṁ bhātyanyonya-vilakṣaṇam ||*

On account of the manifoldness of *māyā*, there appears among its name-form manifestations, such as space etc., a variety of mutual distinctions.

[37]

भाति सर्वेषु सत्यत्वमेकं यद् ब्रह्मणं हि तत् ।

सर्वाधिष्ठानधर्मत्वात् तत्सर्वत्रानुगच्छति ॥३७॥

*bhāti sarveṣu satyatvam-ekaṁ yad brahmagaṁ hi tat |
sarvādhiṣṭhāna-dharmatvāt tat sarvatrā'nugacchati ||*

The reality which is perceived in all (space etc.), that is verily of Brahman only. Being of the nature of the ground of all, it pervades all.

[38]

सर्पधारादण्डमाला रज्ज्वां याः परिकल्पिताः ।

एतासु रज्जुगं दैर्घ्यं सर्वास्वनुगतं यथा ॥३८॥

*sarpa-dhārā-daṇḍa-mālā rajjvāṁ yaḥ parikalpitāḥ |
etāsu rajjugam dairghyam sarvaśvanugataṁ yathā ||*

The manner in which the 'length' of rope inheres in all such superimpositions as snake, a line of flowing water, stick, garland on a rope.

[39]

व्योमाद्या देहपर्यन्ताः सत्ये ब्रह्मणि कल्पिताः ।

सर्वेस्वनुगतं ब्रह्म सत्यत्वं तस्य सुस्थितम् ॥३९॥

*vyomādyā dehaparyantāḥ satye brahmaṇi kalpitāḥ |
sarveśvanugataṁ brahma satyatvam tasya susthitaṁ ||*

(In like manner) on Real Brahman are superimposed (everything) from sky etc. to body. Brahman pervades all. Its reality is truly positive.

The process of creation is nothing but an expansion of the network of 'māyā'. The process is described as transformation of the most subtle elements into the very gross bodies of creatures. This entire world-appearance, arranged in layers as it were, is just superimposed on the immutable and unchanging Brahman, just as the illusions of a snake or a garland, or a line of water, or a crack 'in the ground may be superimposed on a piece of rope. Just as the 'length' of the rope pervades all these superimpositions so does Brahman pervade the world.

[40]

अध्यारोपापवादाभ्यां निष्प्रपञ्चं प्रपञ्च्यते ।

इति न्यायेन देहान्त आरोपः खादिरोरितः ॥४०॥

adhyāropāpavādaḥhyāṁ niṣprapañcam prapañcyate /
iti nyāyena dehānta āropaḥ khādiriritaḥ //

The A-cosmic 'becomes' (the cosmos of) becoming. This, however is (to be understood) as 'super-imposition and subsequent cancellation'¹. According to this logic, superimposition is said to be (of everything) from space to body.

A man is sad or joyful when his son or wife is sad or joyful. The distinction between a man and his son or wife is clear enough. Sorrows and joys of the body, mind and intellect are closer and

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1. Cf *Śaṁkarabhaṣya* on *Gīta* XIII, 13; XVIII 66 for both the use and the mention of this strategy. Also V.S.Bh. IV. 1.2.

progressively more Intimate, yet they do not trouble the 'ātman' which remains untouched by them in deep sleep. These states, therefore, are as if superimposed and do not belong with 'ātman'. Similarly the whole of creation is superimposed on Brahman.

[41]

अथापवादो जगतः कथ्यते ब्रह्मबुद्धये ।

तत्रादौ पुत्रमित्रादिनुच्यै देहात्मतोच्यते ॥४१॥

athāpavādo jagataḥ kathyate brahma-buddhaye |
tatrādau putramitradi-nuttyai dehātmatochyate //

Now is being stated (the process of) cancellation of the world for (gaining) knowledge of Brahman. In this context first is stated self-identification with body in order to remove (identity with) sons and friends.

After describing the process of superimposition, the reverse mode of cancellation is discoursed upon in verses 41-86. One is urged to consider that a sense of belonging with progeny, with the body, the vital air, the mind, the I-consciousness, as well as I as enjoying in the world, is not tenable, because all these are determined by 'time, space and objects' whereas 'ātman' is Immortal and Infinite, and of the nature of Bliss. The identification with the five sheaths of the not-self should be taken up one-by-one in progressive order each as a working hypothesis and discarded by sublating the outer by the inner veil which hides the Witness-Self.

This is in keeping with the described nature of 'māyā', that until the veil is removed, this magic

order of reality is not experienced as an illusion; each level can become so only on its being sublated by a finer and thus a more insistent layer of unreality.

[42]

आत्मा वै पुत्रनामासीत्येवमात्मत्वविभ्रमः ।

लौकिकोऽनूयते पुत्रे श्रुत्या युक्तिश्च विद्यते ॥४२॥

*ātma vai putrahāmasītyevamātmataiva-vibhramah |
laukiko'nūdyate putre śrutya yuktiśca vidyate ||*

The illusion of self-identity with son in the world, is established by the Text *ātma* itself assumes the name of son^I. It is reasonable also.

[43]

साकल्यं पुत्रभार्यादेवैकल्यं चात्मनीक्षते ।

इत्याहुः भाष्यकृत्तेन पुत्रेऽस्ति स्वात्मताभ्रमः ॥४३॥

*sāk. lyam putra-bhāryāder-vaikalyam cātmanīkṣyate |
ityāha bhāḥyakt-tena putre'sti svātmatabhramah ||*

Felicity and infelicity affecting son, wife, etc. are perceived in oneself. This is why says the commentator (Samkaracarya) there is the illusion of self-identity with the son.

[44]

सोऽस्यायमात्मा पुण्येभ्यः प्रतिधीयत इत्यदः ।

वचो वक्त्यैतरेयोऽतः स्वात्मताभ्रम एव हि ॥ ४४॥

*so'syāyamātmā puṇyebhyaḥ pratidhīyata ityadaḥ |
vaco vaktyaitareyo'taḥ svātmata-bhrama eva hi ||*

The Aitareya states that his (the father's) very self is substituted (as the son) for deeds of merit (rites etc.),¹ therefore self-identification (with son etc.), is verily an illusion.²

[45]

एवं व्युदसितुं देहस्यैवात्मत्वमिहोच्यते ।

यो देहोऽन्नमयः सोऽयमेवात्मान्यो न कश्चन ॥४५॥

*evam vyudasitum dehasyaiṣātmatvamihocyate |
yo deho'nnamayah so'yamaṣātmānyo na kaścana ||*

Thus for abandoning (self-identification with son etc.), the body itself is here being stated to be one with the Self : the food (gross) body is itself the Self and no other.

To deflect attention away from the Self as son, wife, etc., it is being focussed on the body and urged toward gradual in wardisation.

[46]

मदीयः पुत्रभार्यादिरिति भेदावभासनात् ।

गौणी स्यादात्मता पुत्रे भृत्यादौ सिंहता यथा ॥४६॥

*madiyah putra-bhāryādir-iti bhedāvabhāsanāt |
gāuṇī syādātmata putre bhṛtyādau siṃhata yathā ||*

'Son, wife, etc. are mine', because of the perception of such distinction, self-identification with son is secondary, as lionness of the servant etc. (that is, when it is said that the servant or some other person is brave as a lion).

[47]

पूर्ववासनया पुत्रे स्वात्मता भाति चेतुनः ।

तद्वासनापनुत्तर्य देहात्मत्वमुपास्यताम् ॥ ४७ ॥

-
1. Aitareya II. 1.4. The one Self, itself, continues in the father-son series.
 2. Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Aitareya II. 1.4.

*pūrva-vāsanayā putre svātmajā bhāti cet punaḥ |
tad vāsanāpanuttyartham dehātmatvam-upāśyatām ||*

If due to previous desires the son is perceived as identified with Self, to remove that desire one must engage in meditation of identity with the body.

Samkaracarya writes that the teaching of this Valli aims at reaching the innermost Truth in the heart of man; but the intellect and mind are so preoccupied with external things that they cannot suddenly be re-called toward an inwardisation without some kind of support for thought. The body is visible to everyone, so by the logic of the 'moon on the branch'¹ the teaching moves gradually from the body to the innermost identity of the I-Consciousness.

[48]

शिरः पक्षौ मध्यपुच्छे इति देहस्य पक्षिताम् ।

ध्यात्वा तन्निष्ठतां प्राप्य त्यजेत्पुत्रात्माश्रुतिम् ॥४८॥

*śiraḥ pakṣau madhyapucche iti dehasya pakṣitām |
dhyātvā tan-niṣṭhātāṁ prāpya tyajet purātmā-śrutim ||*

Meditating on the body in the likeness of a bird (as) head, wings (arms) the middle portion and tail, thereby achieving certainty of that identity (with the body) one should give up (move beyond) the Text stating self-identification with son.

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1. The sliver of the new moon is not at once visible in the sky. Attention may be drawn to the branch of a tree and then directed toward the faintly visible moon on top of it. The branch is just instrumental in directing attention toward something with which it has no real connection. Such is the case with the five sheaths.

The first name-form unit is the body which is described in the imagery of a bird¹ and this imagery is maintained throughout the descriptive analysis of finer layers of the not-self. The body of man has five important sections : the head, the right side, the left side, the middle portion and the nether limbs which support the body.

[49]

धीमनुष्योऽहमित्यस्ति पुत्रोऽहमिति नास्ति धीः ।

विकारोऽस्ति परिव्राजो न पुत्रसुखदुःखयोः ॥४९॥

dhīr-manuṣyo'ham-ityasti putro'ham-iti nāsti dhīḥ |

vikāro'sti parivrājo na putra-sukha-duḥkhayoh ||

The modifications (changing conditions of sorrow and joy) pertain to the traveller,² (the man who returns home and greets his son) and not because of the son's joy and sorrow (because) 'I am a man', such an awareness is known, but not the awareness, 'I am a son'.

The reference here seems to be to 'Kausitaki' II, 11; 'Now when one has been away, on returning home he should kiss his son's head saying 'you are born from every limb of mine, you are born

1. Neither the Text, nor Samkaracarya uses specifically the imagery of a bird. Both describe the form of a man. The word *pakṣa* could mean 'side' as well as 'wing'. Suresvaracarya (T.B.V. II, 243) refers to the bird-like construction for purpose of a sacrifice in this connection ; this is confirmed in *Sāyaṇa-bhāṣya* (on *Taittirīya* II. 1. 1g). Anandagiri clearly puts forward the idea of the imagery of the bird (Gloss on *Samkarabhāṣya* on Tait. II. 1. 1g).

2. See Sankarananda's *Dīpikā* on the *Kauṣitaki* text cited above.

from the heart, you, my son, are myself indeed.' This is stated here as a critique of the notion of the identity of oneself with one's son that is implied in the cited text and also in the 'Aitareya' II, 1.4 referred to earlier. The joy of the father on greeting his son is not one of identification with the son's joy but he is happy himself on seeing his son. A distinction is implied here between father and son.

[50]

अन्नजो देह एवात्मा तदन्नं ब्रह्मबुद्धितः ।

उपास्य सर्वमप्यन्नं स्वाभीष्टं लभते पुमान् ॥५०॥

annajo deha evātmā tadannam brahma-buddhitah |

upāsya sarvamapyannam svābhīṣṭam labhate pumān ||

The body created out of food is Brahman, therefore, food is Brahman¹ by such knowledge meditating on the totality of food man attains his desires.

This section anticipates the teaching of Chapter III of the Upanishad. It summarises the meditative austerities of Bhrigu, who it is stated approached his father Varuna, as a disciple and asked, "Reverend Sir, instruct me about Brahman." Varuna said, "Seek to know that from which all beings here are born, having been born, by which they remain alive, and into which, on departing, they enter. That is Brahman."²

The first meditation of Bhrigu brings him to the conclusion that since by food and sap everything is produced and sustained and also into which everything is transformed, food is Brahman.

1. Tait III. 1. 1.

2. Tait. III, 2.1.

[51]

विवेकाद्वा ध्यानतो वा पुत्राद्यात्मत्वनिहृतौ ।

तथा देहात्मतां त्यक्त्वा प्राणात्मत्वं विचिन्त्यताम् ॥५१॥

*vivekādyā dhyānato vā putrādyātmatvanihṛtau |
tathā dehātmataṁ tyaktvā prāṇātmataṁ vicintyātām ||*

On removal of the sense of self-identification with son etc., by discrimination, (and) discarding the sense of self-identification with the body, vital air as self is to be reflected upon.

[52]

न देहस्यात्मता युक्ता पूर्वजन्मन्यभावतः ।

पुरात्मा देहदं कर्म कृत्वा प्राप्नोत्यदो वपुः ॥५२॥

*na dehasyātmata yuktā pūrva-janmanyabhāvataḥ |
purātmā dehadam karma kṛtvā prāpnotyado vapuḥ ||*

On account of its absence in the previous birth, it is not proper (for) this body to be thought of as Self. Performing bodily action previously, the self attains this body; (of this birth).

The pupil's further reflection brings him to the tentative conclusion that since the body itself is an effect, it cannot be the ultimate cause.

[53]

आयुर्मरणयोर्हेतौ प्राणे जीवात्मतोचिता ।

स्थिते प्राणे भवत्यायुः प्राणापाये तु हीयते ॥५३॥

*āyur-marṇayor-hetau prāṇe jīvātmatochitā |
sthite prāṇe bhavatyāyuhḥ prāṇāpāye tu hīyate ||*

Being cause of life and death, it is proper to consider vital air as the living Self, because life remains while vital air lasts; with the cessation of vital air, (life) also lapses.¹

1. Tait. III. 3.1.

Confronted by the answer that food or the body made of food is Brahman the Teacher again repeats his lesson. The pupil realizes, that the lesson is about that which is the Infinite ground of all. Thereupon Bhrigu gradually comes up with more subtle identifications with Brahman. His meditative analysis tells him that since the vital air is the cause of life, its sustenance and its absence means dissolution. Breath itself is Brahman.¹

[54]

देहात्मवासनानुत्थै प्राणात्मत्वमुपास्यताम् ।

प्राणो ब्रह्मोत्युपासीनः सर्वमायुः समश्नुते ॥५४॥

*dehātma-vāsanā-nuttyai prāṇātmatvamupāsyatām |
prāṇo brahmotyupāsīnaḥ sarvam-āyuh samaśnute ||*

To remove the desire for self-identification with body, (one should) meditate on the self-identification with vital air. Such (a one) who practices meditation believing vital air to be Brahman, attains the entirety of life.²

[55]

प्राणोऽपानः समानश्चोदानव्यानौ च वृत्तायः ।

एतासु पूर्ववत्पक्षमूर्धादीन् परिकल्पयेत् ॥५५॥

*prāṇo'pānaḥ samānaścodāna-vyānau ca vṛttayaḥ |
etaṣu pūrvavat-pakṣa-mūrdhādīn parikalpayet ||*

prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna and vyāna are functions. In these one should ascribe wings, head, etc. as given above.

1. Ibid., 3-1.

2. A full life is generally stated to be of one hundred years. Chh. II. 11-20, IV. 11-13.

[56]

श्वासोऽधोगमनं कृत्स्ने देहेऽन्नस्य सरीकृतिः ।

उद्गारादिर्बलं देहे क्रियास्तासां क्रमादिमाः ॥५६॥

śvāso'dhogamanam kṛtsne dehe'nnasya sarīkṛtiḥ |
udgārādīrbalam dehe kriyāstāsāṃ kramādimaḥ ||

Breathing, the passage of air downward, the absorption of food in the whole body, belching etc., and strength in the body, consecutively these are their (of the five-functions) activities.

[57]

वृत्तिसंघं प्राणमयं ध्यात्वा देहात्मवासनाम् ।

संत्यज्याथ प्राणमये त्यजेद्देहवदात्मताम् ॥५७॥

vṛttisamgham prāṇamayam dhyātvā dehātmaprasanām |
santyaajyātha prāṇamaye tyajed-dehavada-tmatām ||

After meditating on the entire functions pervaded by vital air, one should give up the desire for self-identification with body and thereafter, like the body should be given up self-identification with the pervading vital air.

[58]

प्राणो नात्मा जडत्वेन चेतनस्यात्मतोचिता ।

मनस्तु चेतनत्वेन सर्वस्य प्रतिभासनात् ॥५८॥

prāṇo nātmā jaḍatvena cetanasyātmatochita |
manastu cetanatvena sarvasya pratibhāsanāt ||

Vital air cannot be the Self because of its materiality. It is proper that consciousness should be the Self. Thus is the mind on account of its appearing as conscious to everyone.

This answer, like the previous one evokes the repetition of the lesson from the Teacher. Bhṛigu, then thinks it must be the Mind (mānas) or consciousness without which there is nothing at all¹. It is the mind which grasps the meaning of the scriptures and is instrumental in obeying all injunctions toward moral conduct. So mind is Brahman.

[59]

चक्षुराद्यक्षसापेक्षं मनो बाह्यार्थसाधकम् ।

निरपेक्षेण मनसा सुखाद्यन्तरभासनम् ॥५९॥

cakṣurādyakṣa-sāpekṣaṁ mano bāhyārtha-sādhakam |
nirapekṣeṇa manasā sukhādyantara-bhāsanam ||

The mind conditioned by the senses (like) eyes etc. is instrument of (the knowledge of) external objects and by the unconditioned mind is experienced internal pleasure etc.

Bhṛigu is obliged to abandon this identification because there are lapses of consciousness and it cannot sustain the entirety of creation.

In verses 59-64 the pupil reflects on the factors which make him believe that mind is Brahman and also on the indispensable reason which makes him discard this notion.

[60]

आत्मत्वं मनसो बुद्ध्वा त्यक्तुं प्राणात्मवासनाम् ।

उपासीत मनस्तच्च वृत्त्याख्यावयवैर्युतम् ॥६०॥

ātmatvaṁ manaso buddhvā tyaktuṁ prāṇātmavāsanām |
upāśita manas-tac-ca vṛttyākhyāvayavairyutam ||

1. Tait. III. 4.1.

In order to relinquish the desire for self-identification with vital air (one) should meditate knowing (holding) the mind as Self, that (mind) is characterized by parts known as functions.

[61]

यजुराद्याश्चतुर्वेदा आदेशस्तद्गतो विधिः ।

तद्भासके मनोवृत्तिपञ्चके पक्षिकल्पना ॥६१॥

yajurādyaś-caturvedā ādeśas-tadgato vidhiḥ |

tad-bhāsake manovṛtti-pañcāke pakṣi-kalpanā ||

There are four Vedas, Yajuh etc.; the ruling they contain is injunction. The five mental functions by which their knowledge is acquired, in them (is ascribed) the imagery of the bird.

[62]

अवाङ्मनसगम्यस्य ब्रह्मणोऽप्यवबोधने ।

शक्तं भवेन्मनस्तच्च मनो ब्रह्मेति कल्पना ॥६२॥

avāṅ-manasa-gamyasya brahmaṇo'pyavabodhāne |

śaktam bhaven-manas-tac-ca mano brahmeti kalpanā ||

So that the mind should be capable of knowing that Brahman which is beyond speech and mind, mind is to be thought of itself, as Brahman.¹

[63]

न ब्रह्मणि मनोजन्यस्फूर्तिस्तस्मादगम्यता ।

मनस्यन्तर्मुखे नश्येदविद्या तेन शक्तिता ॥ ६३ ॥

na brahmaṇi manojanya-sphūrtis-tasmād-agamyatā |

manasyantarmukhe naśyed-avidyā tena śaktitā ||

In Brahman there is no pulsation arising out of the mind, therefore, it is inaccessible (to the mind). [But]

1. Tait. III. 4.1.

nescience is to be destroyed, on mind becoming inward seeing, therefore it (the mind) has capability.¹

[64]

प्राणात्मवासनानाशे मनसोऽप्यात्मतां त्यजेत् ।

कर्तुरात्मत्वमुचितं मनोऽन्तः करणं खलु ॥६४॥

prāṇātma-vāsanā-nā'e manaso'pyātmataṁ tyajet |

kartur-ātmatvam-ucitaṁ mano'ntaḥ-karaṇaṁ khalu ||

On the destruction of the desire for self-identification with vital air, (one) should relinquish the selfhood of mind also. The selfhood is proper to the agent, the mind is only the internal organ.

[65]

अहं कर्तेत्यदो ज्ञानं विशिष्टं यस्य भासकम् ।

तत्कर्तृरूपं विज्ञानमात्मत्वेनावगम्यताम् ॥६५॥

ahaṁ kartetyado' jñānaṁ viśiṣṭaṁ yasya bhāsakam |

tat-kartṛrūpaṁ vijñānam-ātmātvenāvagamyatām ||

That agent-form of consciousness, of which the characteristic appearance is such specific ignorance as 'I am the doer', is to be understood as Self itself.²

In verses 65-73 the seeker after knowledge identifies 'ātman' with the ego-consciousness by which man actively participates in the world. Man knows no separation from his own will-power and knows himself as the do-er in the world. Yet reflection brings forth the notion that

1. The mind has potentiality for starting on the process of inwardisation but it may not penetrate beyond the barrier of I-consciousness.
2. This is a form of ignorance because the I-consciousness is not the true Self.

willing is the outside husk of 'enjoying'. The pupil, then, arrives at the innermost layer hiding the ātman, namely enjoyment.

[66]

अहंक्रियत इत्येषोऽहंकाराख्यः स विग्रहे ।

आनखाग्रामभिव्याप्य स्थितो जागरणे स्फुटः ॥६६॥

ahamkriyata ityeṣo'haṁkāraḥkhyah sa vighrahe |

anakhāgrām-abhivyāpya sthito jāgarane sphuṭah ||

The ego-consciousness (in) 'I am doing' fully pervades the body up to the tip of the nails (which is) manifest in the waking state.

[67]

तेन चेतनवद्देहो भाति सुप्तौ तु तल्लयात् ।

भवेत्काष्ठसमो देहस्तेनाहंकार आत्मता ॥६७॥

tena cetanaved-deho bhāti suptaṭ tu tal-layaṭ |

bhavet kaṣṭhasamo dehas-tenāhaṁkāra ātmatā ||

Due to that (ego-consciousness) the body appears to be conscious. On its abeyance in the state of sleep the body becomes like deadwood, therefore (there is ascription of) selfhood in ego-consciousness.

[68]

मदीयं मन इत्युक्तेरात्मनः करणं मनः ।

इत्यात्मानं विविच्याथ तमुपासीत पक्षिवत् ॥६८॥

madīyaṁ mana ityukter-ātmanah karcṇaṁ manah |

ityātmānaṁ vivicyātha tamupāsita pakṣivat ||

On account of this statement, 'my mind,' mind is (seen to be) instrument of the Self, therefore, distinguishing the self it should be meditated upon in the image of the bird.

[69]

श्रद्धाद्याः पञ्च तत्रस्थाः कल्प्या मूर्द्धादिरूपतः ।

श्रद्धास्तिक्यमृतं बुद्धौ यथावस्त्वनुचिन्तनम् ॥६९॥

śraddhādyāḥ pañca tatrasthāḥ kalpyā mūrdhādirūpataḥ |
śraddhāstikyam-ṛtaṁ buddhau yathāvastvanucintanam ||

[70]

यथार्थभाषणं सत्यं योगं एकाग्रता धियः ।

महस्तु योगजं ज्ञानं चिन्त्याः श्रद्धादयोऽखिलाः ॥७०॥

yathārtha-bhāṣaṇam satyam yoga ekāgratā dhiyaḥ |
mahastu yogajam jñānam cintyāḥ śraddhādayo'khilāḥ ||

The five (traits), reverence etc. should be imagined existing therein as head etc. Reverence is faith, the intellect contemplating Reality is *Rta*, speaking exactly is truth, the one pointedness of intelligence is yoga, the knowledge arising out of yoga is *mahā*; Thus are to be contemplated the entirety of (the traits) reverence etc.

[71]

लौकिके वैदिके कर्तुं विज्ञानं ब्रह्म वेत्ति चेत् ।

त्यजेदामरणं नो चेद् ब्रह्मलोके सुखं व्रजेत् ॥७१॥

laukike vaidike kartuṁ vijñānam brahma veti cet |
tyajed-amarṇam no ced brahmaloke sukham vrajet ||

In secular as well as ritualistic (performances) if (one) knows the agency-consciousness to be Brahman and does not give up (such knowledge) until death, (he) goes happily to the region of Brahman (after) death.

[72]

विज्ञानाध्यानतो नश्येन्मनस्यात्मत्ववासना ।

विज्ञानात्मत्वमप्येष त्यजेच्छोकयुतत्वतः ॥७२॥

*vijñāna-dhyānato naśyen-manasyātmatva-vāsanā /
vijñānātmatvam-apyeṣa tyajecchoka-yutatvataḥ //*

By meditating on consciousness the mind's desire for self-identification would be destroyed. (One) should give up self-identification with consciousness also because that is conjoined with sorrow.

[73]

शोकं तरत्यात्मबोधादिति श्रुत्यन्तरे जगौ ।
शोकसागरमग्नोऽयं कर्ता तस्यात्मता न हि ॥७३॥

*śokam taratyātma-bodhāditi śrutyantare jagau /
śokasāgar-magno'yam kartā tasyātmata na hi //*

Another Text states that 'the knower of self goes beyond sorrow'¹ therefore, (as) this agent is immersed in the ocean of sorrow, its self-hood verily is not proper.

[74]

आनन्दस्यात्मता युक्ता सोऽत्रास्ति प्रीतिदर्शनात् ।
सदा भूयासमेवेति नित्यं प्रेमात्मनीक्ष्यते ॥७४॥

*ānandasyātmata yuktā so'trāsti prīti-darśanāt /
sadā bhūyaśam-eva nityaṁ premātmānīkṣyate //*

It is proper for Bliss to be self. It is in this (self) because there is, seen attachment (for self); 'May I be forever', from such (statements) is seen adding love for the self.

[75]

आनन्दैकस्वभावोऽपि कर्तृविज्ञानसंगमात् ।
निजानन्दं तिरस्कृत्य कदाचिच्छोकमाप्नुयात् ॥७५॥

*ānandaika-svabhāvo'pi kartṛ-vijñāna-saṅgamāt /
nijaanandam tiraskṛtya kadācic-chokam-āpnuyāt //*

1. Chh. 7.1.3.

Although Bliss alone is its natural state, even so sometimes due to association with agency-consciousness, it attains to sorrow repudiating its own Bliss.

[76]

समाधिसुप्तिमूर्च्छासु विज्ञानस्य लये सति ।

नित्यानन्दस्वरूपेऽस्मिञ्छोकोऽल्पोऽपि न वीक्ष्यते ॥७६॥

samādhi-supti-mūrccāsu vijñānasya laye sati |
nityānanda-svarūpe'smin-choko'lpo'pi na vīkṣyate ||

No vestige of sorrow is seen in this essentially abiding blissfulness on the cessation of consciousness in the states of *samādhi*, deep sleep and fainting.

This 'ānandamāyā-kośa' (the sheath of bliss also has to be sublated because its form is due to the result of actions. It is true that it is the most subtle of the forms and is known only upon awakening from a deep refreshing sleep. In verses 74-84 the process of cancellation is given. Attention now being fixed upon this innermost layer which covers the witness-Self, the next state would be its simultaneous removal and the realization of Truth.

[77]

मूर्च्छासुप्त्योर्यदज्ञानं भाति तत्कारणं धियः ।

कारणे बुद्धिवृत्तौ च स्वानन्दः प्रतिबिम्बति ॥७७॥

mūrccā-suptyor-yadajñānam bhāti tat-karaṇam dhiyaḥ |
kāraṇe buddhi-vṛttau ca svānandaḥ pratibimbati ||

The nescience 'I did not know' which is apparant in the states of fainting and deep sleep is that of the intellect. The bliss of Self is reflected in the intellectual modes (which are) of the nature of instrumentality.

[78]

दुःखं राजसधीवृत्तौ सात्त्विक्यां तत्सुखं भवेत् ।
प्रियं मोदः प्रमोदश्चेत्युच्यते धीसुखं त्रिधा ॥७८॥

*duḥkham rājas-dhī-vṛttau sātत्वikyām tatsukham bhavet /
priyam modah pramodaścetyucyate dhī-sukham tridhā //*

Sorrow belongs with the mode of active intellect, pleasure happens in the mode of tranquil intellect. There are three kinds of pleasures of the intellect: love, joy and delight.

[79]

इष्टस्य दर्शनाल्लाभाद्भोगाच्च स्युः प्रियादयः ।
ते त्रयः कारणानन्द आत्मानन्दश्च पञ्च ते ॥ ७९ ॥

*iṣṭasya darśanāl-lābhād bhogac-ca syuḥ priyādayaḥ /
te trayaḥ kāraṇānanda ātmānandaśca pañca te //*

Through the sight of the beloved, gain and enjoyment, love etc., take place. Those three are causal Bliss. The Bliss of self is five-fold.

[80]

पक्षिणोऽवयवाः पञ्च मूर्धाद्यास्तेषु कल्पिताः ।
आनन्दमयो कोशोऽयमुपास्यः पूर्वकोशवत् ॥ ८० ॥

*pakṣiṇo'vayavāḥ pañca mūrdhādyas-teṣu kalpitāḥ /
ānandamayo-kośo'yam-upāsyāḥ pūrva-kośavat //*

In these, the five parts, head etc., of the bird are imagined. Meditation should be of this sheath of Bliss as of the previous sheath.

[81]

अन्नप्राणमनोविज्ञानानन्दैर्जनिता इमे ।
कोशास्तेषु क्रमेण स्युरुत्तरोत्तरमान्तराः ॥८१॥

*anna-prāṇa-mano-vijñānāṇḍair-jaṇitā ime /
kośas-teṣu krameṣu syur-uttarottaram-āntarāḥ //*

These sheaths originate from food, vital air, mind, consciousness and bliss, amongst these the latter sheaths, consecutively, are increasingly internal (more subtle than the former sheaths).

[82]

विज्ञानकोशन्यायेन फलमुन्नीयतामिह ।
तदुपास्तिफलं चार्थान्त्वबोधफलं भवेत् ॥८२॥

*vijñāna-kośa-nyāyena phalam-unntīyatām-ihā /
tad-upāsti-phalam cārthāt-tattvabodha-phalam bhavet //*

Here, result should be derived by the logic of the sheath of consciousness. The result of such meditation, in effect, will be the knowledge of Reality.

[83]

आनन्दं ब्रह्म विज्ञाय त्यजेदामरणं न चेत् ।
शरीरे पाप्मनो हित्वा सर्वान्कामानवाप्नुयात् ॥८३॥

*ānandam brāhma vijñāya tyajed-āmarāṇam na cet /
śarīre pāpmāna hitvā sarvāṅkamān-avāpnuyāt //*

Knowing Bliss to be Brahman if (one) does not give up (that knowledge) till death, shedding off all demerits in the body (he) attains fulfilment of all desires.

[84]

आनन्दमयकोशेऽस्मिन्पञ्चमावयवः श्रुतः ।
ब्रह्मशब्देन तद् ब्रह्म स्वात्मानन्द इतीक्ष्यताम् ॥८४॥

*ānandamaya-kośe'smin pañcamāvayavaḥ śrutāḥ /
brahma-śabdena tad brahma svātmānanda itīkṣyatām //*

In this sheath of bliss is the fifth part states. the Text.¹
From the term Brahman one should understand that Brahman is the Bliss of Self.

[85]

उपासनाच्चित्तशुद्धौ ब्रह्मतत्त्वमवैक्षते ।

गुहाहितब्रह्मबोधात्सर्वकामाप्तिरीरिता ॥८५॥

upāsana-cittaśuddhau brahma-tattvam:avekṣate |
guhāhita-brahma-bodhāt sarvakāmāptirīrita ||

The mind being purified by meditation there is vision of the Reality of Brahman. On knowing that Brahman treasured in the cave, all desires are attained; thus it is said.²

[86]

गुहाहितं ब्रह्म यत्तत्सत्यं ज्ञानमिति श्रुतम् ।

तस्य ज्ञानस्य दृश्यास्ते कोशाः सर्वे जगत्तथा ॥८६॥

guhāhitam brahma yat-tat-satyam jñānam-iti śrutam |
tasya jñānasya dṛśyās-te kośāḥ sarvam jagat-tathā ||

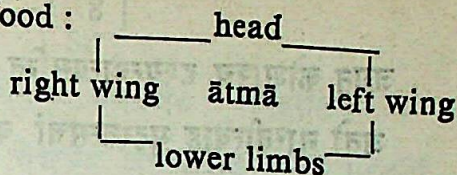
The Text states thus, that which is treasured in the cave is of the nature of Reality and knowledge. These are the visible sheaths of that knowledge as well as of the entire world.

The imagery of the bird used for the process of superimposition and cancellation can be diagrammed as on next page :

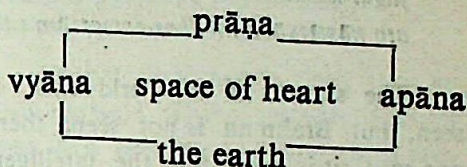
1. Sarvopaniṣad 6.

2. Tait. II. 1.1d.

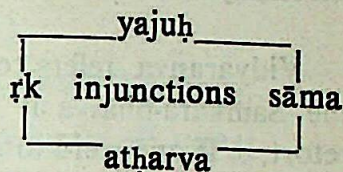
The gross body of food :



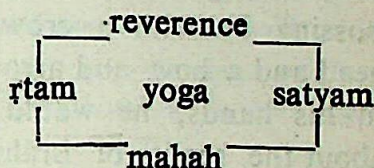
Breath of life :



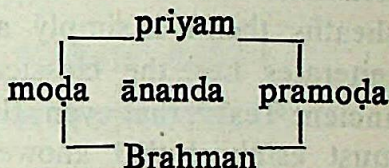
Conscious mind :



the sphere of willing :



the sphere of enjoying :



From the diagram, it becomes clear that the lesson teaches that the ātman which is in 'the space of the heart' inside the body is to be known as Brahman. The seeker must proceed by way of restraintment of propensities, active engagements in moral duties and yogic practices for achieving one-pointedness of the mind.

[87]

जगत् कोशाश्च दृश्यत्वात्त्वसन्ति ब्रह्म न दृश्यते ।

अतो नास्तीत्याह मूढस्तत्सत्तां वक्ति बुद्धिमान् ॥८७॥

jagat-kośāś ca dṛśyatvāt vasanti brahma na dṛśyate |
ato nāstītyāha mūḍhas-tatsattām vakti buddhimān ||

The sheaths of the world exist on account of being seen, but Brahman is not seen; therefore, the insensitive one says 'it is not.' But the intelligent one acknowledges its Reality.

Vidyaranya refers to the sceptic's question in the Saṃkara-bhāṣya at this point. A sceptic may retort, "If one were to say that a barren woman's son, having bathed in the waters of a mirage, is passing by with a crown of sky-flowers on his head and a bow and arrow made of hare's horns in his hands, he would be as plausible as you about the reality of Brahman." In other words if Brahman as the witness Self is thus hidden in the sheaths then it is simply a non-entity. The author reiterates here the classical answer based on an ancient Text,¹ that even the denial of Self needs must establish that knower which can never be known as an object of knowledge. All knowing is made possible by it, just as the Sun makes it possible for the eye to see objects. How would the sun be proved? It can only be realized as Truth of Reality.²

1. Br. IV. 1. 14.

2. Mund. II. 2:10 and 11; *Swetasvatara*, VI. 14.

[88]

ब्रह्म नास्तीति चेद्वेद स्वयमेव भवेदसत् ।

कोशात्मता दूषिता चेन्नान्य आत्मास्ति तन्मते ॥८८॥

brahma nāstīti ced-veda svayam-eva bhaved asat |
kośātmata dūṣita cen-nānya ātmāsti tan-mate ||

If anybody thinks thus that 'Brahman is not', then he himself would be proven unreal.¹ If the self-identification with sheaths is erroneous then according to him there cannot be any other Self.

[89]

आनन्दमयकोशेऽपि प्रियाद्या नश्वरास्त्रयः ।

अज्ञानं च ज्ञाननाश्यं न ब्रह्माङ्गीकरोत्यसौ ॥८९॥

ānandamaya-kōṣe'pi priyadya naśvarāś-trayaḥ |
ajñānaṃ ca jñāna-nāśyaṃ na brahmāṅg karotyasaḥ ||

The three transients love etc. are in the sheath of Bliss as well. Ignorance capable of being destroyed by knowledge does not admit in it (the reality of) Brahman.

[90]

अस्ति ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद स्वयमेवात्र संभवेत् ।

अदृश्यस्यापि सत्ता स्यात्स्वप्रकाशत्वसंभवात् ॥९०॥

asti brahmeti ced-veda svayam-evātra sambhavet |
adṛśyasyāpi sattā syāt svaprakāśatva-sambhavaḥ ||

If (one) admits 'Brahman exists' then his existence itself may be here established. On account of its self-

1. The denial of that by which everything else is made possible is stated to be self-destructive. The line of argument being followed here maintains that the true Self can be posited only by the process of cancellation of all false identifications including the ego-consciousness.

luminosity the existence of the unseen (hidden) would be established.

[91]

गौणात्मा पुत्रभार्यादिर्मिथ्यात्मान्नमयादिकः ।

ब्रह्मानन्दो मुख्य आत्मा क्रमेणैते विवेचिताः ॥९१॥

*gauṇātmā puṭra-bhāryādir-mithyātmānnamayādikaḥ |
brahmānando mukhya ātmā krameṇāite vivecitāḥ ||*

Sons, wife etc are secondary Self. The Self of food etc. is unreal-self. Bliss of Brahman is primary Self. These have been discoursed upon in order.

[92]

उत्तरात्मविवेकेऽस्य पूर्वात्मा देहतां व्रजेत् ।

तेनोत्तरेण पूर्वस्य पूर्णत्वाद्देहिदेहता ॥९२॥

*Uttarātmā-viveke'sya purvātmā dehatāṃ vrajet |
tenottareṇa pūrvasya pūrṇatvād-dehi-dehatā ||*

Knowledge being gained of the latter self, (in a series) the former self is transformed into the state of body. Because the former attains completion due to the latter, therefore, there is relationship of body and indweller between the two.

[93]

सत्येवं निखिलं पूर्वं शरीरं ह्यन्तिमात्मनः ।

ब्रह्मानन्दस्तु शरीरः पूर्वस्यात्मेति निर्णयः ॥९३॥

*satyevaṃ nikhilam pūrvam śarīraṃ hyantimātmanaḥ |
brahmānandas-tu śarīraḥ pūrvasyātmēti nirṇayaḥ ||*

In this situation all the previous selfs are the body of the last self. The Bliss of Brahman alone being the self of the former is the indweller of body, this is the conclusion.

[94]

श्रवणं मननं चोभे तत्त्वज्ञानस्य साधने ।

उक्तनिर्णयपर्यन्तं विज्ञानं श्रवणाद्भवेत् ॥९४॥

śravaṇam mananam cobhe tattva-jñānasya sādhanē |

ukta-nirṇaya-paryantaṁ vijñānam śravaṇād bhavet ||

Hearkening and meditation are the two instruments to knowledge of reality. 'There may be knowledge from hearkening until the aforesaid conclusion (is reached).

The beginning of enquiry into the realms of superimposition, therefore, must start with Śravaṇa, that is, listening or hearkening to the Śruti. After listening to the words of the Teacher, the student may still have doubts and for dispelling this state of the mind the discipline of meditative understanding is recommended. These doubts are not the rejections of the sceptic but questions which are likely to trouble the mind of the seeker. Vidyāranya mentions three doubts : (1) regarding the reality of Brahman itself, (2) the liberation of the believer, and (3) the liberation of the nonbeliever.

[95]

अथ स्वबुद्धिदोषेण यतः संदेहसंभवः ।

अतोऽसौ मननं कुर्यात्संदेहाः स्युस्त्रयोऽस्य हि ॥९५॥

atha sva-buddhi-doṣeṇa yataḥ saṁdeha-sambhavaḥ |

ato'sau mananam kuryāt saṁdehāḥ syus-trayo'sya hi ||

Subsequently due to the short-coming of one's intellect, doubts may arise, therefore, he should meditate. He may have three doubts.

[96]

ब्रह्मास्ति नो वेत्येकः स्यादज्ञानी मुच्यते न वा ।

तत्त्वविन्मुच्यते नो वेत्यपरौ संशयाबुधौ ॥९६॥

brahmāsti no vetyekah syād-ajñānī mucyate na vā |
tattvavin-mucyate no vetyaparau saṁśayāvubhau ||

Whether Brahman exists or not—is the first. If (It) exists then can the ignorant be liberated or not. Whether the knower of Reality attains to liberation or not; these are the other two doubts.

[97]

यदस्तिनामरूपाभ्यां व्याप्तं तद्वियदादिकम् ।

ब्रह्म निर्नामरूपत्वाच्चास्तीत्याह विमूढधीः ॥९७॥

yad-asti nā-na-rūpābhyāṁ vyāptam tad viyadādikam |
brahma nirnā-na-rūpatvān-nāstītyāha vimūḍha-dhīḥ ||

That which is pervaded by name-form, namely, space etc., exists; because Brahman is devoid of name-form, it does not exist, such is said by very deluded people.

[98]

विवेकी ब्रह्मणः सत्तां सृष्टिकामादिहेतुभिः ।

साधयन् बहुधा मूढं बोधयेन्मोहनुत्तये ॥९८॥

vivekī brahmaṇḥ sattāṁ sṛṣṭi-kāmādi-hetubhiḥ |
sādhayan bahudhā mūḍham bodhayen-moha-nuttaye ||

The man of discernment proving the existence of Brahman by such causes as the desire for creation etc., should advise the ignorant repeatedly for dispelling delusions.¹

1. The created world affirms the Reality of Brahman as it comes into existence due only to the desire for creation on the part of Brahman.

The first question is raised regarding the real nature of Brahman. So far Brahman has been described as Infinite, of the nature of Bliss, consciousness, and the ultimate ground of the entire world. It has also been stated that this Brahman is in the innermost recesses of the heart. Now the neutrality of Brahman is being personified, as it were, by reference to His desire for creation.

[99]

अकामयत सृष्ट्यादौ परमात्मा स्वमायया ।

बहुस्यामहमेवातः प्रजायेयेति कामना ॥९९॥

akāmayata sṛṣṭyādau paramātmā sva-māyayā |

bahusyām-aham-evātaḥ prajāyeyeti kāmānā ||

At the beginning of creation God expressed desire that He Himself by his *māyā* would become many. Hence the desire for Self-procreation.¹

[100]

स्वस्यैव बहुधा चोक्तेरुपादानं मृदादिवत् ।

तथा कामयितृत्वेन निमित्तात्वं कुलालवत् ॥१००॥

svasyaiva bahudhā cokter-upādānaṁ mṛdādivat |

tathā kāmayitṛtvena nimittatvaṁ kulālavat ||

On account of this statement He Himself like clay etc., is the manifold material cause. And although desiring, there is no instrumentality like the potter etc.

[101]

निर्धर्मकेऽप्यात्मतत्त्वे निमित्तात्वं स्वमायया ।

उपादानत्वसहितं माया दुर्घटकारिणी ॥१०१॥

1. Tait. II. 6.1.

nirdharmake'pyātma-tattve nimittatvaṃ svamāyayā |
upādānatva-sahitaṃ māyā durghaṭa-kārinī ||

On account of His *māyā*, in the unqualified reality of Self there is instrumentality together with materiality. *Māyā* creates imponderables.

[102]

असंभाव्यं न मायायामुपालम्भं न साऽर्हति ।

ततो वेदो यथा ब्रूते सृष्टिरेषा तथेव्यताम् ॥१०२॥

asambhavyaṃ na māyāyam-upalambhaṃ na sārhati |
tato vedo yathā brūte sṛṣṭireṣā tathesyatām ||

There is nothing impossible in *māyā*, therefore, it is not to be taken cognisance of. Therefore, this creation is to be understood as is stated by the Vedas.

The text indicates that it is not a fruitful process to question the work of 'māyā'. The world is to be accepted as it is presented by 'māyā'. Or, in other words, the world is, because 'māyā' is. They are simultaneous.

[103]

सृज्यमालोचयन् सर्वमसृजत्परमेश्वरः ।

सृष्ट्वाऽथ जीवरूपेण प्रविवेश वपुष्ययम् ॥१०३॥

srjyam-ālocayan sarvam-asṛjat paramēśvaraḥ |
sṛṣṭvātha jīvarūpeṇa praviveśa vapuṣyayam ||

Reflecting on whatever is to be created, God created everything. Thereafter (He) entered into the body in the shape of the creature.¹

Brahman, who is named God with reference to creation is not the instrumental cause like the potter; both materiality and instrumentality belong with 'māyā.' God's desire "Let Me become

1. Tait. II. 6.1.

many' is itself the actuality of creation. God's creation is for His enjoyment alone. He as enjoyer enters into His creation and thus becomes the object of enjoyment as well.

[104]

यो विज्ञानमयस्तस्मिंश्चैतन्यं प्रतिविम्बितम् ।

तच्च धारयति प्राणञ्जीवाख्यां लभते ततः ॥१०४॥

*yo vijñānamayas-tasmī ścaitanyam pratibimbitam |
tac-ca dhārayati prāṇañ-jīvā'khyam labhate tataḥ ||*

Consciousness is reflected in that which is of the nature of intellect, which supports the vital air. Thus it gets the designation of creature.

[105]

भोक्ता भूत्वेश्वरस्तद्वद्भोग्यरूपोऽपि सोऽभवत् ।

भोग्यं च बहुधा सच्चत्यच्चेत्यादिविभेदतः ॥१०५॥

*bhoktā bhūtesvaras-tadvad bhogyarūpo'pi so'bhavat |
bhogyam ca bahudhā sac-ca tyac-cetyādivibhedataḥ ||*

God, on being the enjoyer, likewise became the object of enjoyment also. On account of the distinctions of this and that etc. the object of enjoyment is of many kinds.

[106]

सत्प्रत्यक्षं परोक्षं त्यक्तदभावबुभौ तथा ।

वक्तुं शक्यमशक्यं चेत्यादिद्वन्द्वेऽस्ति भोग्यता ॥१०६॥

*sat pratyakṣam parokṣam tyat tadabhāvāvubhau tathā |
vaktum śakyamaśakyam cetyādi dvandve'sti bhogyatā ||*

The real is sensible and 'that' denotes the indirect and in the same manner also the absence of both. It is speakable and it is not speakable; in this opposition there is enjoyableness.

[107]

कामित्वमालोचकत्वं त्सष्टृवं च प्रवेष्टृता ।

भोग्याकारश्च पञ्चैते ब्रह्मसद्भावहेतवः ॥१०७॥

kāmitvam-āloakatvam śraṣṭṛtvam ca praveṣṭṛta /
bhogyākāraśca pañcāite brahma-sadbhāvahetaḥ //

The nature of desirer, the nature of contemplater, the nature of creator, the nature of penetrator, and the form of the object of enjoyment—these five are causes of (showing) Brahman's reality.

We see that Brahman, desires, then contemplates, creates, enters into the creations and becomes the object of enjoyment as well. By these five characterisations we may know of the reality of Brahman, not as an inferred entity but directly as so knowable by the wise.

[108]

सद्रूपः परमात्मा स्यात्कामित्वात्स्वर्गकामिवत् ।

आलोचनान्मन्त्रिवत्सन्स्रष्टृत्वाच्च कुलालवत् ॥१०८॥

sadrūpaḥ paramātmā syāt kāmitvāt svargakāmivat /
ālocanān-mantrivat san sraṣṭṛtvāc-ca kulālavat //

On account of being the desirer, God would be of the nature of reality like one desirous of heaven. On account of reflection he is real like a minister; being creator, he is like the potter.

[109]

प्रवेष्टृत्वात्सर्पवत्सन् भोग्यत्वाच्चोदनादिवत् ।

नानुमानैरेव किन्तु विद्वत्प्रत्यक्षतोऽपि सन् ॥१०९॥

praveṣṭṛtvāt śarpavat san bhogyatvāc-codanādivat /
nānumānāireva kintu vidvāt-pratyakṣato'pi san //

Being the penetrator he is like the snake (within the scale) and being the object of enjoyment is like the grain of rice etc. Not verily by inference but on account of the direct perception of the knowledgeable He is real.

[110]

यत्सत्यं ब्रह्म पूर्वोक्तं तदेव जगदात्मना ।

भाति भ्रान्त्या ततः सर्वं ब्रह्मेत्याचक्षते बुधाः ॥११०॥

*yat satyam brahma p̄rvoktam tadeva jagadātmanā |
bhāti bhrāntyā tataḥ sarvaṁ brahmetyācakṣate budhāḥ ||*

That which is of the nature of reality has been stated earlier, that very Brahman appears as world-soul due to illusion; therefore, the wise speak of everything as Brahman.

[111]

सर्पधारादिका भ्रान्त्या कल्पिता तत्त्वदर्शने ।

रज्जुरेव यथा तद्वद् ब्रह्मैव सकलं जगत् ॥१११॥

*sarpa-dhārādikā bhrāntyā kalpita tattva-darśane |
rajjureva yathā tadvad brahmaiva sakalam jagat ||*

The way in which snake, line of water etc. appearing so on account of illusion are (transformed to) rope itself on gaining the vision of reality, so Brahman alone is the entire world.

[112]

नामरूपयुतत्वेन जगत्सद्ब्रह्म नेति यत् ।

पूर्वपक्षिमतं तन्न ब्रह्मसत्त्वं तदीक्ष्यताम् ॥११२॥

*nāmarūpayutatvena jagat sad-brahma neti yat |
p̄rvapakṣimatam tan-na brahmasattvaṁ tadīkṣyatām ||*

'The world is real being connected with name-form and Brahman is not', such an opinion of the critic is not correct, therefore, Brahman should be understood as real.

[113]

रज्जुदैर्घ्यं यथा सर्पधारादिष्वनुगच्छति ।

ब्रह्मसत्त्वं तथा व्योमवाय्वादिव्वनुगच्छति ॥११३॥

*rajjudairghyam yathā sarpadhārādiṣvanugacchati |
brahmsattvaṁ tathā vyomavāyvādiṣvanugacchati ||*

The manner in which the 'length' of rope is pervasive in snake, line of water etc., similarly the reality of Brahman is pervasive in sky, wind etc.

[114]

असदेवेदमग्रेऽभून्नामरूपात्मकं जगत् ।

पश्चात्तु ब्रह्मणा सृष्टं सदभूद्ब्रह्मसत्त्वतः ॥११४॥

*asadevedamagre'bhūn nāmarūpātmakam jagat |
paścāt-tu brahmanā sṛṣṭam sadubhud brahmasattvataḥ ||*

This world of the nature of name-form formerly was verily non-existing. Later being created by Brahman, became real on account of the reality of Brahman.¹

In verses 114-125 the author deals with the first doubt. The world created by Brahman is pervaded by His indicative qualities, namely, reality, consciousness and bliss. We experience the reality of things and are conscious, but the Infinity of Brahman cannot be experienced directly, but only as pleasures of the moment. This fragmentation of bliss-experience spurs us toward the plenitude of supreme Bliss. The quality of 'Infinite' therefore is used interchangeably with Bliss in other Texts also². Vidyaranya

1. Chh. 3.19.1.2. *Vajrasūcikopaniṣad* 9; *Adhyātmopaniṣad* 32; *Akṣyupaniṣad* 48, *Mund. II. 2. 7*; *Sarvopaniṣad* 3.

propounds the classical view by saying that the qualities of 'is', 'known', 'pleasurable' adhering in objects are due to their being grounded in Brahman and their variety of names and forms belong with 'māyā.' Ātman is linked with Brahman by striving perpetually for Bliss supreme because it is ever being denied of it in this world. Thus is established the reality of Brahman as answer to the first doubt.

[115]

तद्ब्रह्मात्मानमेवेमं सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम् ।

अकार्षीज्जगदाकारं स्वयमेव स्वमायया ॥११५॥

tad-brahmātmānam-evamam saccidānandalakṣaṇam |
akārṣījjagadākāraṁ svayameva svamāyayā //

That Brahman-Self, of the nature of, reality, consciousness, bliss, Itself with Its māyā transformed into the form of the world.

[116]

अस्ति भाति प्रियं चेति प्रतिवस्त्ववभासते ।

त एते सच्चिदानन्दा ब्रह्मणा भान्ति वस्तुषु ॥११६॥

asti bhāti priyaṁ ceti prativastvavabhāṣate |
ta ete saccidānandā brahmaṇā bhānti vastuṣu //

'It is real', 'It is cognizable', 'It is enjoyable', this is how every object is apprehended. These are the Reality, Consciousness and Bliss of Brahman, manifested in the objects.¹

Every entity has five characteristics, viz., existence, cognizability, attractiveness, form and matter. Of these, the first three belong to

1. *Dīg-Dīśya Viveka*, 20.

Brahman and the next two to the world, on
‘māyā’.

[117]

नामरूपे घटादीनां प्रागभावयुते ततः ।
अभावत्वं च भावत्वं पर्यायेणैक्ष्यते तयोः ॥११७॥
nāmarūpe ghaṭādināṃ prāgabhāvayute tataḥ |
abhāvatvaṃ ca bhāvatvaṃ paryāyeṇekṣyate tayor |

The name-form of pot etc. were previously of the nature
of non-existence, therefore, their non-existence and exis-
tence are seen consecutively.

[118]

आगमापायिधर्मौ यौ न तयोर्धर्मिरूपता ।
शयनोत्थानयोर्नास्ति देहवस्तुस्वरूपता ॥११८॥
āgamāpāyidharmau yau na tayor-dharmi-rūpatā |
śayanotthānāyor-nāsti dehavastusvarūpatā ||

Those two qualities of being momentary and being
finite cannot be of the nature of that (which is) qualified.
Lying down and arising, are not (simultaneously) of the
nature of the reality of the body.

[119]

सत्त्वासत्त्वेऽन्यदीये भासेते नामरूपयोः ।
मायारूपमसत्त्वं स्यात्सत्ताया ब्रह्मरूपता ॥११९॥
sattvasattve'nyadīye bhāsete nāmarūpayor |
māyārūpam-asattvaṃ syāt sattāyā brahmarūpatā ||

The reality and unreality of the other things are mani-
fest in the form of name-form. Unreality is of the nature
of māyā and reality of the nature of Brahman.

[120]

जाड्यदुःखे मायिके स्तो भानानन्दौ परात्मगौ ।

लौकिकाः सच्चिदानन्दा ब्रह्मगाश्चेदसत्कथम् ॥१२०॥

*jā 'yadu'khe māyike sto bhānānandau parātmagau |
laukikāḥ saccidānandā brahmagāḥ-ched asatkatham ||*

Materiality and sorrow belong to *māya* and consciousness and bliss belong to God. If these worldly realities, consciousness and bliss, are of Brahman, how can they be unreal ?

[121]

भवेत्तु ब्रह्मसत्ताऽस्मिन्नानन्दोऽस्ति कथं शृणु ।

आनन्दोऽत्राभ्युपेतव्यो रसवान्मधुरादिवत् ॥१२१॥

*bhavet-tu brahmasattā'sminnānando'sti katham śṛṇu |
ānando'trābhyupetavyo rasavān madhurādivat ||*

[122]

मूढस्य मधुरादिः स्याद्रसो ब्रह्म विवेकिनः ।

मधुरादिभुगानन्दी ब्रह्मविच्च तथा सुखी ॥१२२॥

*muḥhasya madhurādih syād raso brahma vivekinah |
madhurādibhugānandī brahmavica tathā sukhī ||*

How can there be reality of Brahman in this, if it is asked, but no bliss, then listen to this : Just as that which is of sweet flavour is understood to be sweet etc., similarly here bliss in this is to be understood. For the undiscerning sweetness etc. are taste but for the discerning it is Brahman. The enjoyer of sweetness etc. is blissful and the knower of Brahman is happy.

[123]

ब्रह्मानन्दो न चेदत्र देहं को नाम चेष्टयेत् ।

प्राणाश्वाणां चेष्टकत्वं न तत्र करणत्वतः ॥१२३॥

brahmāṇando na ced-atra deham ko nāna ceṣṭayet |
prāṇākṣāṇam ceṣṭakatvam na tatra kāraṇatvataḥ ||

If there is no bliss of Brahman here then who would use the body for striving? For, *prāṇa*, eye etc. being mere instruments cannot have agency in striving.¹

[124]

न केवलं चेष्टकृत्वं विषयानन्दहेतुता ।
 अप्यल्पविषयान् लब्ध्वा स्वानन्दं मज्जति क्षणम् ॥१२४॥

na kevalam ceṣṭakaṭvaṁ viṣayaṇanda-hetuta |
apyalpa-viṣayaṇ labdhvā svānande majjati kṣaṇam ||

Just exertion alone is not to be cause of the pleasure of objects. From acquiring a few objects also (he, the knower) immerses in his own bliss for a moment.

[125]

विषयानन्दपर्यन्तैः कामसृष्ट्यादिहेतुभिः ।
 ब्रह्मसत्त्वे स्थिते मुक्तिश्चिन्त्यते विद्वदज्ञयोः ॥१२५॥

viṣayaṇandaparyantaiḥ kama-sṛṣṭyādihetubhiḥ |
brahmasattve sthite muktiś-cintyate vidvad-ajñayoḥ ||

Starting from the creation by desire upto the pleasure of objects etc. the reality of Brahman being established, thereafter the liberation of the knower and the ignorant is (next) considered.

[126]

विद्वान्ब्रह्मेति मुक्तश्चेत् मुच्येताज्ञोऽप्यभिज्ञवत् ।
 ब्रह्मरूपोऽपि बद्धश्चेदज्ञोऽभिज्ञोऽपि बध्यते ॥१२६॥

vidvān brahmeti muktaś-cet mucyetajño'pyabhiññavat |
brahmarūpo'pi baddhaś-cedajño'bhiññō'pi badhyate ||

1. Tait. II. 7.1.

If the knower on account of being Brahman is liberated, then the ignorant like the knower also would be free. If even on being of the nature of Brahman, the ignorant is in bondage, then the knower is also in bondage.

Verses 126-130 answer the other two questions. The second and third doubts are two aspects of the same question. It is knowledge which liberates, neither belief nor disbelief. The desire for knowledge and its fulfilment is liberation; therefore neither is anyone specially entitled (including the gods) nor is anyone debarred from it. Moreover, the world does not ever dissipate into nothingness, it only ceases to affect the knower of Brahman. A man will react with fear to the sudden appearance of a threatening figure in the dark, but he will not be disturbed if he knows it to be the stump of a tree.

[127]

मैवं ब्रह्मात्मैक्यबोध एवैको मोक्षकारणम् ।

ऐक्यदर्शी मुच्यतेऽतो भेददर्शी न मुच्यते ॥१२७॥

maivam brahmātmaikyabodha evaiko mokṣakāraṇam |

aikyadarśī mucyate'to bhedadarśī na mucyate ||

(To say this) is not correct because the knowledge of the one-ness of Self and Brahman is the (one and) only cause of liberation. Therefore the knower of one-ness is liberated and the knower of differences is not liberated.¹

-
1. It is knowledge which liberates, neither belief nor disbelief. See also *kāṭha* 4.11.

[128]

ऊर्ध्वाकारे समेऽप्यस्मिश्चोरदर्शी बिभेति हि ।

स्थाणुदर्शी निर्भयोऽतस्तत्त्वबोधः प्रयोजकः ॥१२८॥

ūrdhvākāre same'pyasmiścoradurśī bibheti hi |
sthāṇudarśī nirbhayo'tas-tattvabodhaḥ prayojakaḥ ||

Because of the form of height etc., if somebody sees the form of a thief then he is afraid; but one who sees it as a dead stump remains fearless. Therefore knowledge of reality alone is the instigating factor.

[129]

ज्ञातेऽपि कर्मकाण्डार्थे वेदान्तार्थमजानतः ।

जन्मादिभिर्भवत्येव वाय्वादीनां यथा तथा ॥१२९॥

jñāte'pi karmakāṇḍārthe vedāntārtham-ajānataḥ |
janmadibhir-bhavatyeva vāyvādīnāṃ yathā tathā ||

Even after knowing the meaning of rituals, there does remain the fear of birth etc. as in the case of the wind etc., for those ignorant of the meaning of Vedānta.¹

[130]

वायुः सूर्यो वह्निरिन्द्रो मृत्युश्चातीतजन्मनि ।

धर्मज्ञा अप्यतत्त्वज्ञा इदानीं बिभ्यतीश्वरत् ॥१३०॥

vāyuḥ sūryo vahnir-Indro mṛtyuścātītajanmani |
dharmajñā apyatattvajñā idānīm bibhyatīśvarat ||

Wind, Sun, Fire, Indra and Death although knowers of dharma in (their) previous birth, are now in fear of God because of not being knowers of Reality (Brahman).

[131]

ज्ञानी कामानेति सर्वान् 'रसो वै स' इति श्रुतम् ।

ब्रह्मानन्दं स्फुटीकतु¹ मीमांसाऽनन्दगोच्यते ॥१३१॥

1. *Kaṭha* 6 3; *Tait.* II. 8.1.

*jñānti kāmān-eti sarvān raso vai sa iti śrutam |
brahmānandam sphuṭikartum mīmāṃsā'nandagocyate ||*

The knower achieves all desires. He is flavour itself, thus says the Text.¹ To clarify the bliss of Brahman is being stated the reflective exegesis leading to bliss.

In the next 10 verses Vidyaranya describes the state of desirelessness or complete blissfulness of the knower of Brahman. Actually the knower cannot be said to be blissful because he is of the nature of the flavour (of bliss) itself. This one flavour pervades the entirety of creation. All those who are satisfied with their portions of this bliss do not look for the source of it but the true seeker, does not rest till he attains to it. There is no differentiation in this state of fulfilment; all who attain liberation experience the Oneness of this homogenous flavour of bliss

It may be recalled that Bhrigu's meditative analysis and austerities had brought him to the conclusion that Brahman is food. He had approached his Teacher with this answer, but asked to continue with his 'tapasyā' (meditation in silent retreat from the world) Bhrigu, thereafter, progressed from identifying Brahman with food (the body) to vital air, the mind, the intellect, and the enjoying-self. Lastly, discarding even the enjoying self as transient, he realized the identity of his 'Ātman' with Brahman as Bliss Supreme. He did not return to his father anymore with this answer but went

1. Tait. II. 6.1.

around singing joyously of the experience of Oneness :

He Knew Bliss to be Brahman; verily all beings here are indeed born, from Bliss; having been born they are sustained in Bliss and on departing they reenter Bliss. This same Knowledge of Bhrigu and Varuna is established in the cosmic sky (the innermost space in the heart).¹

[132]

सम्पूर्णो मानुषानन्दः सार्वभौमे गुणैर्युते ।
हिरण्यगर्भे सम्पूर्णो देवानन्दोऽवधी हि तौ ॥१३२॥

sampūrṇo mānuṣānandaḥ sārva-bhaume guṇair-yute |
hiraṇyagarbhe sampūrṇo devānando'vadhī hi tau ||

In cosmic *Hiraṇyagarbha* possessed of many qualities is internalized the bliss of the whole of mankind and the bliss of the gods. These two are to be understood.²

[133]

मध्यस्थे पूर्वपुण्यानामुत्कर्षाद्वर्धते सुखम् ।
सर्वेषां यत्सुखं तत्तु निष्कामे ज्ञानिनीष्यते ॥१३३॥

madhyasthe pūrvapuṇyānām-utkarṣād vardhate sukham |
sarveṣāṃ yat sukhaṃ tattu niṣkāme jñāniniṣyate ||

For the one in the middle (of the path) due to the increase of previously acquired merit, happiness increases. Verily that which is the happiness of all is desired in the desireless knower. (The yogin desires the happiness of all).

1. Tait. III. 6-1

2. Br. 4.3.33; Tait. II. 8. 1-4.

[134]

सर्वकामाप्तिरेषाथ रसाख्यानन्द उच्यते ।

अध्यात्ममधिभूतं चाधिदैवं चैक एव सः ॥१३४॥

sarvakāmāptireṣātha rasākhyānanda ucyate |
adhyātmam-adhibhūtaṁ cādhaivam caika eva saḥ ||

Thereafter the gain of all desires is the bliss called *rasa* (flavour). That residing in the Self, that residing in the elements and that belonging to the divinities are (in fact) that one (*rasa*) only.¹

[135]

सर्वे स्वस्वपदे तृप्ताः कामयन्ते न तत्पदम् ।

ज्ञानी तु दोषदृष्ट्यात्र निष्कामस्तैः समस्ततः ॥१३५॥

sarve svasvapade tṛptāḥ kāmayante na tatpadam |
jñānī tu doṣadṛṣṭyātra niṣkāmas-taiḥ samastataḥ ||

Satisfied in their own positions they do not desire that status—(of Brahman). But finding fault here the knower is free of desire from all that.

[136]

बुभुत्सौ पुरुषेऽन्येषु मनुष्येषु च योऽस्ति यः ।

आदित्ये चान्यदेवेषु स आनन्दो न भिद्यते ॥१३६॥

bubhutsau puruṣe'nyeṣu manuṣyeṣu ca yo'sti yaḥ |
āditye cānyadeveṣu sa ānando na bhidyate ||

The bliss which is in the seeker of knowledge and the bliss in other men, in the Sun and the bliss in other gods is not different.²

[137]

परप्रेमास्पदत्वस्य

लक्षणस्यैकरूपतः ।

लक्ष्यानन्दो न भिन्नः स्यादखण्डैकरसो ह्यतः ॥१३७॥

1. Tait. II. 7.1.

2. Tait. II. 8. 5.

parapremāspadatvasya lakṣaṇasyaikarūpataḥ |
lakṣyānando na bhinnah syād akhaṇaikaraso hyataḥ ||

The characteristic of that which is the most beloved being identity, the bliss of attainment of goal is not different. Therefore flavour is partless (whole) and homogeneous.

[138]

एवं विद्वान् स्वपुत्रादेः कोशषट्कात्प्रकल्पितात् ।
व्युत्थायाखण्डैकरसे स्वानन्दे प्रतितिष्ठति ॥१३८॥
evam vidvān svaputrādeḥ kośaṣṭkāṭ prakalpitaṭ |
vyutthāyākhaṇaikarase svānande pratitiṣṭhati ||

Thus the knower rising above the imagined six sheaths of one's own son etc. is established in this bliss of Self which is whole and of homogeneous flavour.¹

[139]

सार्वभौमादिकानन्दाः पूर्वैभ्यः शतसंख्यया ।
परेऽधिकास्ते तु लेशा ब्रह्मानन्दस्य बिन्दुवत् ॥१३९॥
sārvabhaumādikanandaḥ pūrvebhyaḥ śatasamkhyayā |
pare'dhikāste tu leśa brahmānandasya binduvat ||

The universal bliss etc. are hundred times more than the previous (types of) bliss, but they also are like drops, mere impressions, of the bliss of Brahman.²

[140]

तस्मादियत्ता नैवास्य वक्तुं ध्यातुं च शक्यते ।
न बिभेत्येव तं विद्वान् जन्महेतोः कुतश्चन ॥१४०॥
tasmādiyatta naivāsya vaktuṃ dhyātuṃ ca śakyaṭe |
na bibhetyeva tam vidvān janmahetoḥ kutaścana ||

1. Tait II. 8-5.

2. Br. 4. 3. 32.

Therefore its limit (measure) cannot be stated and cannot be thought. The knower of that is never in fear of the cause of birth or anything else.

[141]

पुण्यं नाकरवं कस्मात्पापं तु कृतवान्कृतः ।

इति चिन्ता तपत्यज्ञं ज्ञानिनं न तपत्यसौ ॥१४१॥

puṇyaṁ nākaravaṁ kasmāḥ pāpaṁ tu kṛtvān kutaḥ |
iti cintā tapatyajñaṁ jyāninaṁ na tapatyasau ||

Why did I not acquire merit, why did I commit sin, such thoughts scorch the ignorant but do not scorch the Knower.¹

Wrongness and righteousness pertain to the world of duality. In the state of peaceful self-identity with the whole of creation, there is no 'other' to be confronted in pain or pleasure. A state of contemplative 'self-joy' is to be imagined unbroken by demands as well as rewards from the world. This state of reaching beyond good and evil is for the knower of Brahman only who sings aloud in an ecstasy of joy his experience of identity with all, like Bhrigu.

[142]

तापकत्वं तयोर्विद्वानुपेक्षानुष्ठितत्वयोः ।

आत्मानं प्रीणयन् बोधात्सुदृढीकुरुते धियम् ॥१४२॥

tāpakatvaṁ tayor-vidvān-upekṣānuṣṭhitaṁ tvayoh |
ātmanam prīṇayan bodhāt sudṛḍhīkurate dhiyam ||

Knowing the scorching nature of both and knowing with indifference the rituals related to both, thus making the self happy (he) makes his intellect steadfast with understanding.²

1. Tait. II. 9. 1.

2. Tait. II. 9. 1.

[143]

देहेन्द्रियकृते पुण्यपापे चात्मतया सदा ।

पश्यन् सर्वात्मतां स्वस्य गायन् साम्नावतिष्ठते ॥१४३॥

dehendriyakṛte puṇyapāpe cātmatayā sadā |
paśyan sarvātmataṁ svasya gāyan sāmna'vatiṣṭhate ||

Knowing both virtue and sin to be products of body and bodily organs only, seeing all things as oneself and oneself as all things, (the wise man) abides singing the hymns of the *Sāma-veda*

[144]

अहमन्नं तथानादः श्लोककृच्चेतरोऽप्यहम् ।

इति सर्वात्मतां गायन् जीवन्मुक्त इतीर्यते ॥१४४॥

ahamannam tathānnādaḥ śloka-kṛcchetaro'pyaham |
iti sarvātmataṁ gāyan jīvaumukta itīryate ||

'I am food, I am the enjoyer, I am the mediator, distinct also am I', so singing the universality of Self (he) is known to be liberated in this life.¹

[145]

जीवन्मुक्त्यवसानाया विद्याया मुख्यसाधनम् ।

विचारो ब्रह्मणस्तेन भृगुर्ब्रह्मावबुद्धवान् ॥१४५॥

jīvanmuktyavasānāyā vidyāyā mukhyasāadhanam |
vicāro brahmaṇastena bhṛgurbrahmāvabuddhavan ||

Contemplation on Brahman is the principle means of attaining liberation in this life; by this (contemplation) *Bhṛgu* realized Brahman.²

Vidyaranya refers to the modes of self-discipline leading upto renunciation to forestall

1. Tait. III. 10. 6.

2. Tait. III. 1-10, Śankarabhasya on Tait III. 10-6.

any idea that the Bliss of Brahman is a state of irrepressible enjoyment. There is here no denial or trivializing of moral values, but an indication of a sphere of knowing where they will become irrelevant. All such questions are with regard to the duality of the I-consciousness and 'It or 'they' the irreducible 'other'. If the I-consciousness were to include the entirety of creation and go beyond it as well then all would be as it should be and in no way could it be different from how it is and thus exactly it is celebrated by the Knower of Brahman. According to the philosophy which is being expounded here, gradation is recognized in the dimension of pleasure and pain and also in that of righteousness and evil. These are subjective to the doer and the scriptures respectively ; Knowledge is objective and self-evident, it is not brought about either by efforts of the doer or injunctions from the Scriptures. Both are, however, conducive to the awakening of the longing for Knowledge. Knowledge shines by its own light.

[146]

सत्यं तपो दमः शान्तिर्दानं धर्मः प्रजाग्नयः ।

अग्निहोत्रं यागयोगौ न्यासश्चैतैर्बुभुत्सताम् ॥१४६॥

satyaṁ tapo damaḥ śāntirdānaṁ dharmah prajāgnayah /

agnihotraṁ yāgayogau nyāsaścaitairbubhutsatām //

Truth, austerities, self-control, tranquility, charity, righteousness, sacrifice, attending to fire, rituals yoga, and renunciation, these verily are for the seeker of truth.¹

[147]

न्यासोऽधिकं तपो न्यासी युञ्जीतात्मानमोमिति ।
योगिनस्तस्य देहांशा यागांगैरखिलैः समाः ॥१४७॥

nyāso'adhikam tapo nyāsi yuñjītatmānamomiti |
yoginastasya dehāṅśa yāgāṅgairakhilaiḥ samāḥ ||

[148]

अहोरात्रादिकालास्तु समा दर्शादियागकैः ।
जीवनं सत्रतुल्यं स्यान्मुच्यते योगिसेवकः ॥१४८॥

ahorātrādikalāstu samā darśādiyāgakaiḥ |
jīvanam satratulyam syānmucyate yogisevakah ||

Renunciation is supreme austerity; the ascetic (renunciate) should identify his self with (the *mantra*) Om.^३ The limbs of the yogi is equal to all the constituents of a sacrifice. For him time as day and night, is like the *Darśa* etc. (and) whose life verily is like a sacrifice. Such an one admired as yogi is indeed liberated.

[149]

स चोत्तरायणे प्रेत आदित्यं प्राप्य मुच्यते ।
अयने दक्षिणे प्रेतश्चन्द्रं प्राप्य न मुच्यते ॥१४९॥

1. According to Vidyananya *Bhṛgu's* liberation is due to *Vividiṣā* (yearning for Knowledge); he mentions further the possibilities of liberation for the ascetic yogi as well.
2. The practice of *praṇava-upāsanā* (meditation on the four stages of the mind) is indicated here by the author which could lead to liberation also and is called *Vidvatsamnyāsa*. *Anubhūtiprakāśah* Chapter 20 (on *Praṇava-upāsanā* and *J.vanmuktiviveka*, 5).

sa cottarāyaṇe preta ādityaṃ prāpya mucyate |
ayane dakṣiṇe pretoścāndraṃ prāpya na mucyate ||

Departing (after death) (along) the northern path, reaching the (region of the) Sun, he is liberated; departing the southern path, reaching the (region of) moon he is not liberated (that is, he is born again).

[150]

तैत्तिरीयकविद्यायाः प्रकाशेनोपसेवितः ।

बुभुत्सुननुगृह्णातु विद्यातीर्थमहेश्वरः ॥१५०॥

॥ इति तैत्तिरीयक-विद्या-प्रकाशः ॥

taittirīyakavidyāyāḥ prakāśenopasevitāḥ |
bubhūtsūnanugrṇātu vidyātirthamahēśvaraḥ ||

May the great Lord *Vidyātirtha* bestow (his) blessings on those who are desirous of knowledge, wishing to be enlightened by the light of the *Taittirīyaka-vidyā*.

Here is concluded the Second Chapter of *Anubhūti Prakāśah* entitled *Taittirīyaka-vidyā-prakāśah* by Sri Vidyāranya Muni.

The author concludes by saying that if the seeker is unable to achieve Self-realization in this life, then after death he may attain to more exalted spheres of action and from there again he may renew his efforts for enlightenment. For those, who are not raised to a higher world, there is rebirth again in this world. Vidyāranya indicates here that an ascetic by practising meditation on the identity of the Self and the 'praṇava' (Om) may also attain to liberation. This path is for the seeker of highest

qualification (śreṣṭha adhikāri) exemplified by the sage Yājñavalkya. This is the mode of expansion of Self-identity with the entirety of things, 'as I am all and all am I'. The same realization comes to the one who proceeds by way of separating himself from the layers of not-self with the discriminating approach of 'I am not this, I am not this etc.' Such discriminatory analysis is for the seeker who has attained to 'vividīṣā', that is yearning for knowledge; therefore, anybody could arrive at this stage of longing for liberation, as we see from the references to Maitreyi, Gargi, Vidura, etc.¹

Vidyāranya concludes his commentary by seeking the blessings of his Teacher Sri Vidyātīrtha toward himself and all those who would wish to understand the teaching contained in the Taittirīyopaniṣad.

1. *Jīvanmuktiviveka*. 1.

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INDEX OF WORDS*

Absolute, the,	61, 69, 70	Culture	55
absolutism	62, 75	Cybernation	45
agnosticism	128	Cybernetic	15, 38, 40
alienation	19, 26, 43, 149	Detachment	1, 150,
analogy	130	Divine purpose	119
anti-intellectualism	90	dogma	143
ascetism	125	epistemology	65, 91, 103, 104, 131, 133, 145
automation	27, 29, 37, 38, 45, 47, 49	error	3
Bliss	1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 53, 84, 113, 115, 137, 152, 154, 160, 164, 187, 196, 205- 207, 209, 211, 212	eternal principle	115
Brahman	1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 84, 113-119, 121, 123, 125, 129, 131, 134, 136, 137, 147, 153-154, 157, 160, 162, 164, 166, 168, 170- 172, 174-175, 177, 179, 181, 182, 184, 185, 186, 188, 189, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 200-212	false	124
Cancellation	146, 182, 184	future	48, 73
Cave	183, 190-191, 194, 206	Grace	25, 28
Chance	27, 28	Hebraism	19
Christianity	19, 20, 22, 23, 65, 72	Hellenism	19
Christian theology	64, 152	hermeneutical awareness	152
Christian values	149	historicism	15
Cognition	3, 49, 52, 134, 146	history	18, 22, 23, 27, 135
Creation	115, 117, 118, 135, 184, 203	humanism	25
		humanity	72
		I-consciousness	1, 3, 5, 139, 180, 186, 189, 194
		illusion	139
		illusory	111, 122
		Industrial Revolution	23, 31, 38
		intention	86, 88, 107, 108, 109, 127, 129, 146
		Juslice	149, 176
		knowable	102

* Pertaining to Part I

- knowability 45, 101, 130
 knowledge 54, 88, 91, 97,
 103-107, 130, 153, 154,
 155, 157, 171, 173, 177,
 188, 198-200, 209
 liberation 174, 178, 186,
 187, 188
 mechanisation 27, 45, 49, 52
 metaphysics 34, 61, 76, 77,
 79, 92, 146, 156, 159
 modern 49, 50, 52
 modernity 7, 11, 14, 16, 28,
 47, 51, 52, 162, 165
 modernization 6, 9, 11, 12,
 15, 28, 45, 50, 51
 monism 74, 90, 105, 108
 morality 176
 nature 18, 19, 21, 25, 35,
 38, 39, 54, 148
 neo-vedanta 2, 6, 7, 8, 72,
 77, 83, 84, 127, 139,
 142, 152, 157, 161, 162,
 164
 nothingness 12, 13, 14, 47
 not-self 5
 ontology 165
 ontological ground 54
 ontological priority 83
 Pantheism 73, 113, 123
 paradox 128, 196, 197, 198
 perennial philosophy 158,
 159
 progress 23, 31, 32, 43, 51
 Reality 5, 8, 84, 106, 128,
 137, 138, 139
 realization 121, 204
 renunciation 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 53,
 83, 153, 154, 159, 161,
 164, 166, 183, 187, 198,
 209, 211
 revelation 22, 129, 131, 134
 reverance 21, 51
 righteousness 176
 Salvation 149
 science 27, 28, 34, 35, 36,
 37, 45, 47, 48
 secularism 76, 161
 secularization 51, 133
 self, the, 94, 95, 97, 99, 104,
 105, 107, 115, 123, 124,
 129, 131, 137, 162, 173,
 174, 177-179, 181, 189,
 190, 195, 197, 199, 209
 self-consciousness 97, 99,
 100, 103, 108
 self-knowledge 94
 self-realization 103, 131,
 124, 145, 179, 189
 separation 1, 19, 53, 54, 83,
 136, 155, 186
 soteriology 85, 145, 147, 148
 spiritual 121
 superimposition 3, 5
 technology 15-17, 27, 29,
 31-34, 36-38, 42, 45, 47,
 50-52, 55
 time 72, 73, 135
 tragedy 18
 transcendence 19, 27, 119
 Ultimate knower 101, 148,
 149
 ultimate knowledge 154
 ultimate reality 1, 122, 200

INDEX OF WORDS AND NAMES

111

universalism	159, 163	Westernization	7, 11, 12, 17, 51, 77, 133, 139, 148, 161, 211
unknown	92, 194	witness-consciousness	140, 206
unknowable	92, 102, 103, 108, 128, 199.	witness-self	4, 195
veil	2, 4, 147, 186, 197	world-negation	73
veiling	161, 193		

Index of Names

Arendt, Hannah	20	Loewith, Karl,	23, 61
Aristotle	46	Mueller, M,	59
Arnold, Mathew	19	Mumford, Lewis	33
<i>Bhṛgu</i>	206-207	Nietzsche, F.	25
Bradley, F. H.,	58, 62, 69, 80, 91	Plato	19
Ellul, Jacques	29, 40	Promethius	32
Fackenheim, E. L.	22	Raja Rammohun Roy,	140
<i>Gārgi</i>	208	<i>Sanatkumāra</i>	208
Green, T. H.	62, 91, 92	<i>Samkarācārya</i>	1-4, 6, 9, 104- 107, 109, 133-140, 147, 150, 153, 174, 177, 181, 183, 184, 189, 190, 191, 194, 200-201
Guenon, R.	16	<i>Sāyanācārya</i>	166, 172, 173, 177
Hegel	21-23, 58, 60-67, 76, 77, 91, 92, 101, 102, 108	Strauss, Leo,	27, 28
Heidegger, M.	15	<i>Sureśvara</i>	105, 183, 184
Homer	46	<i>Varuṇa</i>	207
Hume, D.,	60-61, 94-96	Wiener, Norbert	40
<i>Janaka</i>	208	<i>Yajñavalkya</i>	168
Kant, I,	6, 7, 21, 22, 26, 28, 58, 62-67, 76, 77, 91, 92, 94, 96, 97, 101, 102, 108		

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Ait.	<i>Aitareyopaniṣad</i>
Ait. Up. bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Aitareyopaniṣad</i>
Br.	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad</i>
Br. Up. bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad</i>
Chh.	<i>Chhāndogypopaniṣad</i>
Chh. Up. bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Chhāndogypopaniṣad</i>
Gaud.	<i>Gauḥapādakārikā on Māndūkyopaniṣad</i>
Gita bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on the Gītā.</i>
Isa	<i>Īsopaniṣad</i>
Katha	<i>Kaṭhopaniṣad</i>
Kena	<i>Kenopaniṣad</i>
Mand.	<i>Māndūkyopaniṣad.</i>
Mund.	<i>Mundakopaniṣad</i>
Mund. Up. bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Mundakopaniṣad</i>
Nris	<i>Nṛsimhottaratāpani Upaniṣad</i>
Prasna	<i>Praśnopaniṣad</i>
Prasna. Up. bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Praśnopaniṣad</i>
Sayana	<i>Sāyaṇabhāṣya on Taittirīya Āraṇyaka, Chapters (prapāṭhaka) 7, 8 and 9.</i>
Suresvara Vartikam	<i>Taittirīyopaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtikam by Śrī Sureśvarācārya</i>
Svetas	<i>Śvetāśvataropaniṣad</i>
Tait.	<i>Taittirīyopaniṣad</i>
V.S.	<i>Vedānta Sūtra</i>
V. S. bh.	<i>Śaṅkarabhāṣya on Vedānta Sūtra.</i>

The Author

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Dr. Bithika Mukerji was educated at Allahabad University. Her first thesis was written under the guidance of Prof. A.C. Mukerji. She was invited to lead a Seminar and participate in a Graduate Programme in Bossey, Geneva, during the year 1972-73. Prof. N. A. Nissiotis, the Director of the Graduate School wrote the following words about her work at Bossey : "Dr. B. Mukerji did an excellent academic work and her presence amongst us who lived together in an international, intercultural and interreligious community was very precious. Her knowledge of philosophy both of the East and the West allowed her to make a great contribution to our work throughout the whole term".

From Geneva she went to McGill Master University, Canada and studied intensively for writing her Thesis on the Ontology of Bliss. Her knowledge and grasp of Indian as well as Western Philosophy makes her eminently qualified to write on the subject. To quote Dr. George Grant, who was one of the examiners of her thesis "Both westerners and easterners should read the book with close attention".

Dr. Mukerji had been teaching at Banaras Hindu University.

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